



Collaboration and Conservation

Lessons Learned from National Park Service Partnership Areas in the Western United States



A Report on a Workshop
March 18–19, 2003 • Santa Fe, New Mexico

Convened for the
National Park Service Park Planning and Special Studies Program
by the Conservation Study Institute
and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment



This report is the sixth in the Conservation and Stewardship Publication Series produced by the Conservation Study Institute. This series includes a variety of publications designed to provide information on conservation history and current practice for professionals and the public. The series editor is Nora J. Mitchell, director of the Conservation Study Institute. The editors of this volume are Jacquelyn L. Tuxill, Nora J. Mitchell, and Jessica Brown.

This report is based on a workshop convened for the National Park Service Park Planning and Special Studies Program by the Conservation Study Institute and QLF/Atlantic Center for the Environment. For more information on these organizations, see descriptions on the inside back cover of this report.

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- No. 3 *Collaboration and Conservation: Lessons Learned in Areas Managed through National Park Service Partnerships*, 2001
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ON THE COVER: Near Abiquiú, New Mexico. The Abiquiú area has been important in the history of New Mexico—an 18th century Spanish outpost, a principal stopover on the Old Spanish Trail, and a community of Hispanicized Indians, the Génizaros, whose plaza is still intact. Abiquiú is one of the Hispanic communities within the proposed Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area that maintains historic traditions, customs, and practices.

BACKGROUND: Joshua Tree National Park in California

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CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP PUBLICATION NO. 6

*Edited by Jacquelyn L. Tuxill, Nora J. Mitchell, and Jessica Brown
Published by the Conservation Study Institute
Woodstock, Vermont
2004*

Dear Colleagues,

Partnerships play a growing role in our national system of parks and protected areas and will be central to its future. As partnerships are integral to the work of both our organizations, we were pleased to be asked by the National Park Service Park Planning and Special Studies Program to convene this workshop on “Conservation and Collaboration: Lessons Learned from National Park Service Partnerships in the Western United States.” The workshop, held in Santa Fe, built on the findings of a workshop we had convened in Vermont in 2000. The Santa Fe workshop provided an opportunity to explore similar issues in the context of the western United States and to take stock of progress in the three years since the first workshop on this topic.

This workshop and report are timely given recent trends in conservation, which include an increased interest in partnerships by the public sector and the growing strength and sophistication of the nonprofit sector. Conservation today encompasses a broad range of values: linking nature and culture, working at a larger scale across disciplines and political boundaries (including international ones), valuing local knowledge, and collaborating with a variety of stakeholders. With an emphasis on place-based initiatives and stewardship, people and organizations working on conservation are now engaging communities, respecting their leadership, and recognizing their special places.

Reflecting the progress that has been made in gaining broad acceptance for partnerships and the growing experience with this work, the Santa Fe workshop focused on what successful partnerships look like “on the ground,” teasing out the elements of strong partnerships and exploring how these can be replicated. We believe the community-centered focus of this report is key, because ultimately people take care of what is most meaningful to them. Conservation partnerships that engage citizens in the care of their special places will be successful and sustainable over the long term.

This work is complicated and challenging, and practitioners rarely have a chance to reflect on what they have learned or have a focused dialogue with their peers. The 2003 Santa Fe workshop, as did the 2000 workshop in Vermont, provided participants with the opportunity to do both. The participants in this session brought extensive experience working in diverse partnership settings. It was a great pleasure for us to work with this group and to learn from their experience with partnerships in the western United States.

With this publication, we are pleased to share participants’ insights and experiences with a broader audience of practitioners, land managers, community leaders, and citizens. We hope their recommendations for creating a sustainable environment for partnerships will stimulate additional discussions and lead to more successful collaborations for conservation. As always, we welcome your thoughts.

*Nora J. Mitchell
Director
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FOREWORD

The national park system encompasses areas with more than 25 different titles including parks, preserves, reserves, historical parks, seashores, lakeshores, battlefields, memorials and historic sites. Visitors pay little attention to the different designations and often assume that all of these areas are managed by the National Park Service. In fact, the national park system includes a wide range of different management arrangements involving partners.

Partnerships are the focus of considerable attention in 2004, but the NPS has a long history of working with others to establish, manage, and protect national parks and other parts of the nation's heritage. Action by state governments and private philanthropists assembled land for many of our best known national parks including Acadia, Grand Teton, Virgin Islands, and Shenandoah. Canyon de Chelly National Monument, established in 1931, is one of the early partnership examples where the National Park Service shares responsibility for management with the Navajo Nation, owners of the land within the park boundaries. Public interests and recent congressional designations are expanding partnership approaches and creating new formulas for national recognition and new roles for the National Park Service.

While partnering is extremely popular, one of the biggest challenges facing the NPS is how to most effectively embrace the dictionary definition of partnerships as "close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities." This suggests the need to go beyond just seeking financial support from friends and address some difficult questions about how to clearly define

relationships and share responsibilities among several diverse parties. Some partnerships have been very successful, but there is no standard model that fits all and each new partnership requires a certain amount of craftsmanship.

From the park planning and special studies perspective, we find many similarities in the challenges being faced by newly established parks, heritage areas, wild and scenic rivers, and long distance trails. In 2000, we asked the Conservation Study Institute to facilitate a symposium on this topic to encourage sharing of experience across these programs. A session conducted in Woodstock, Vermont, which drew primarily on experience in the East, identified principles that lead to successful partnerships and the benefits that extend throughout the national park system. The report that follows, from a second symposium held in Santa Fe focusing on experience in the West, summarizes insights and recommendations for creating an institutional framework and processes that will sustain partnerships over the long term.

We hope that the results of this workshop will be part of a continuing discussion about how the National Park Service can work more effectively in partnership with others to conserve and protect our nation's natural and cultural treasures on either side of a boundary that designates a park, river, trail, or heritage area.

*Warren Brown
Program Manager
Park Planning and Special Studies
National Park Service*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Partnerships...are a tremendous force for stewardship of the landscape—...
not just landscapes adjacent to parks, national rivers, national trails, and heritage areas,
but across the street, on the other side of town, and in numerous rural settings.*

— Jere Krakow, Superintendent, National Trails System, Intermountain Region, National Park Service

A wealth of wisdom resides with people who have put many hours into making conservation partnerships successful on the ground. Successful conservation protects natural and cultural resources, preserves landscapes that provide meaning to our lives, and engages diverse organizations and individuals who have a stake in what happens to those resources. Collaboration builds the personal relationships that are critical to sustaining the partnership over the long term, shares administration and decisionmaking, and passes the baton of stewardship to an expanding network—and a new generation—of citizens.

In March 2003, 27 people with extensive and varied partnership experience from the National Park Service (NPS) and partner organizations gathered at a two-day workshop in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to share the lessons they had learned about building effective conservation partnerships and to discuss how to create a sustainable approach to partnerships that includes the NPS, other federal agencies, and a wide range of partner organizations.

This workshop, “Collaboration and Conservation: Lessons Learned from NPS Partnership Areas in the Western U.S.,” was designed to build on a similar workshop held three years earlier in Woodstock, Vermont (see Tuxill and Mitchell 2001 in Further Reading). The Woodstock workshop described principles that lead to successful partnerships, and the benefits that extend throughout the national park system and help the NPS and its partners achieve their conservation mission. Although much of the discussion in Santa Fe reinforced the dialogue of the Woodstock workshop, one difference between the two workshops was striking. Today there is a more supportive environment for conservation partnerships, although significant challenges to creating successful, long-term, sustainable partnerships remain.

The Santa Fe workshop opened with a series of presentations that provided the context for partner-

ships, including a discussion of the challenges and opportunities that exist in the western U.S. As participants discussed their experience and examined several case studies more closely, nine characteristics of successful partnerships emerged:

- A shared vision, created through the full engagement of all partners, agency and non-agency alike;
- Ownership of the partnership throughout each partner organization;
- A genuine commitment to sharing responsibility in problem-solving and decisionmaking;
- Strong interpersonal relationships, trust, and ongoing communication;
- An appreciation and reliance upon one another’s strengths;
- A flexible administrative environment for the partnership that encourages and rewards creativity, risk-taking, innovation, and entrepreneurship;
- Sustained leadership at a variety of levels within each partner organization;
- A strong local “taproot” that grounds the partnership in place, heritage, and traditions; and
- Place-based education initiatives that catalyze citizen engagement.

Participants envisioned a model for a sustainable environment for partnerships and an institutional framework that would facilitate long-lasting relationships. Their community-centered model, with federal and state agencies and private nongovernmental organizations working together to facilitate and support community-level partnerships, is combined with a feedback process that captures and internalizes the lessons learned. This feedback loop is transformative, leading to a minimization of administrative barriers and a supportive authorizing environment that encourages partnerships.

Through partnership areas, parks can share expertise and technical assistance with communities, enhancing the residents' ability to preserve the cultural resources and living traditions of the region in which they live. By doing so, parks can contribute to the long-term survival of the communities and landscapes that provide important cultural and historical context for parks.

— Nancy Morgan, Executive Director, Cane River National Heritage Area

Their institutional framework for creating a positive, enabling environment for partnerships includes an overall guiding vision for partnerships and the presence of a strong “partnership culture” within both agency and non-agency partners. Collaborative leadership skills are valued and encouraged by all partners, and governing models rely on shared control and decisionmaking, local engagement, flexibility, effective communication, and learning from experience.

Finally, participants developed a set of strategic recommendations for creating a sustainable environment for partnerships that included the following:

- Develop a compelling, inspirational statement that conveys the vision and message that partnerships are integral to carrying out the conservation mission of the NPS, and market the message widely throughout the agency and with partners;
- Undertake “asset mapping” within the NPS and other federal agencies in order to build on current strengths; this would include compiling success stories that demonstrate best practices, assessing benefits and beneficiaries, identifying and addressing gaps in the partnership toolbox, and identifying capacity-building needs and opportunities;
- Undertake research and analysis to support partnership development and recommend actions to enhance the sustainability of partnership work, including addressing current barriers to partnerships, defining the characteristics of successful collaborative leadership, and identifying incentives for community-centered partnerships;
- Build the capacity for effective partnerships within the NPS, other federal agencies, and part-

ner organizations through targeted training, sharing of lessons learned, and networking and exchange; and

- Share success stories and celebrate successes more broadly in order to increase understanding of and support for partnership work.

Although this report draws most extensively from experience with National Park Service partnerships, participants recognized the applicability to other federal agencies and the importance of creating a broader exchange across all federal land managing agencies and a broad array of partners. They intended their recommendations to apply to both agency and partner institutions.

Within the NPS and sister agencies today there is considerable movement toward partnerships as a means of accomplishing conservation missions. As these efforts move forward, it is imperative to incorporate the lessons learned from successful community-centered partnerships and put in place the structure and processes that will sustain partnerships over the long term. It is through partner relationships cultivated over time that we nurture a stewardship ethic, achieve an engaged citizenry, reach new constituencies, and commemorate stories hitherto overlooked. The ability to conserve America’s most treasured landscapes and the natural and cultural heritage they contain will ultimately rest on our success at creating such lasting partnerships.



a. Canyon de Chelly National Monument in Arizona, established in 1931, has from its inception been a partnership between the NPS and the Navajo Nation, which has continued to own the land. Navajos live and farm within the monument today.

b. One of several historic structures at Pacific Springs on the Oregon and California National Historic Trails, located just west of the continental divide at South Pass in western Wyoming. South Pass offered a lower elevation crossing of the Rocky Mountains to Pony Express riders as well as emigrants on their way to Oregon, Utah, and California territories.



c. Keith Bear of the Mandan Tribe provides a Trails & Rails interpretive program on Amtrak's Empire Builder train through North Dakota. Trails & Rails, a national partnership between the NPS and Amtrak, offers educational opportunities to passengers that encourage appreciation of regional natural and cultural heritage.



d. Crissy Field Center, a program partnership between Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, offers people of all ages and backgrounds opportunities to examine the intersections of the urban, human-centered world, and the natural world. The center is located at Crissy Field, a 100-acre parcel of restored waterfront parkland within the national recreation area.



I. Workshop Goals and Design

The March 2003 workshop, “Collaboration and Conservation: Lessons Learned from National Park Service Partnership Areas in the Western U.S.,” brought together 27 participants from the National Park Service (NPS) and partner agencies and organizations who have extensive experience working in diverse partnership settings primarily in the western United States. The charge to participants was not only to share what they had learned about creating effective partnerships, but also to reflect more profoundly on what changes might be needed in the National Park Service to ensure a genuine commitment to partnerships. The workshop was designed to build on a similar workshop held three years earlier in Woodstock, Vermont (see Tuxill and Mitchell 2001 in Further Reading).

The workshop had the following goals:

- Distill the lessons learned from areas managed through NPS partnerships, with a focus on western areas;
- Examine issues and challenges that cut across the spectrum of partnership areas and the transferability of approaches;
- Identify ways to enhance the effectiveness of existing partnership areas and to guide planning for those under consideration;
- Support NPS Director Fran Mainella’s partnership initiative and the work of the NPS Partnership Council; and
- Continue building the network of people involved in partnerships and strengthen understanding of the tools and leadership skills essential to sustaining long-term partner relationships.



The workshop was structured to encourage reflection and dialogue through a variety of approaches. Prior to the meeting, participants responded to a set of questions related to 1) the strengths and successes of partnership areas; 2) the key issues and challenges facing the NPS and its partners in planning for and managing partnership areas; 3) the critical factors for successful and effective planning and management of partnership areas; and 4) the contribution and role of partnership areas to conservation of the American landscape both now and in the future. Participants’ responses helped frame the workshop agenda and discussions, and contributed both to the case studies developed for the workshop and to this report.

Workshop participants had numerous opportunities during the two days they were together to reflect on what leads to successful partnership work and share the insights they have gained. The first day included an examination by partnership area type (see box on partnership vocabulary on page 5) of what is working well and why; a closer look at specific cases; and a roundtable dialogue, in which participants built upon each other’s insights. On the second day, participants were challenged to think strategically about what a sustainable environment for partnerships would look like—both on a national scale and at the community level—and what it would take to achieve this. They were asked to think expansively and to envision how their organizations could participate.

Although the workshop focused on National Park Service partnerships, participants agreed that the insights discussed and the recommendations developed for creating partnership-supportive environments would benefit others—including other federal agencies—who work with partnerships involving communities and public lands. This report attempts to capture participants’ wisdom and strategic thinking, as well as their candor, in order to produce a document that can inform public land–community partnerships and help guide all partners toward more effective stewardship of this nation’s special landscapes.

a. A partnership approach to planning along the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River in Texas led to negotiated landowner agreements along most of the designated river's private reaches, designed to protect the outstanding river values and the critical river put-in and take-out locations.

b. Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, located on Whidbey Island in Washington state, preserves an historic farming landscape that also includes the Victorian seaport of Coupeville. The Reserve is managed through a partnership among the NPS; state, county, and local governments; and private nonprofit organizations.

c. Grant-Kobrs National Historic Site in Montana—"the nation's ranch"—preserves a working cattle ranch with more than 125 years of ranching heritage. The ranch benefits from a formal partnership with Utah State University through the Tehabi program. Students work as ranch hands, learning low stress livestock handling techniques while training cattle to prefer invasive species as forage, providing the ranch much needed resource management assistance.

d. Point Reyes National Seashore in California preserves the natural ecosystems and diverse cultural resources of a spectacularly beautiful coastal landscape. The park has identified 12 historic cultural landscapes within its boundaries and the north district of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which it administers. The single largest of these, the "historic dairy district," includes a number of ranches that have been in continuous operation since the 1860s.

e. The boundary of Redwood National and State Parks encompasses three California state parks. The NPS and California Department of Parks and Recreation jointly administer this popular destination area.

f. Death Valley National Park in California contains ancestral homelands of the 'Timbisha Shoshone, who received federal recognition as a tribe in 1983. In 2000 the 'Timbisha Shoshone Homeland Act conveyed 314 acres of land within the park to the 'Timbisha Tribe; established other special use areas on federal land, to be co-managed by the NPS, Bureau of Land Management, and the tribe; and created a tribe-NPS partnership for interpreting the 'Timbisha history and culture to park visitors.





II. Setting the Context

What partnerships require is reaching for the best in ourselves, reaching for the best in our institutions, and reaching for the best of our country's values—the values of civic engagement and deep democracy that are so fundamental to this nation.

— Greg Moore, Executive Director
Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

The first “Collaboration and Conservation” workshop, held in Woodstock, Vermont, in 2000, was one of the first opportunities specifically designed for practitioners to share their experiences of working in National Park Service partnership areas (see box on partnership vocabulary on page 5) that extend the traditional NPS management model. At that workshop, participants described principles that contribute to successful partnerships and the benefits that spread from partnership areas throughout the national park system. Looking to the future, participants in the 2000 workshop recognized the ongoing need to learn from both the NPS and its partners about building effective long-term collaborations. They also identified the importance of creating a broader vision for the NPS and its partners that includes diverse partnership models, and of fostering a deeper understanding of partnerships as a potent catalyst for landscape stewardship (see Tuxill and Mitchell 2001 in Further Reading).

Three years later, the setting for partnership work had changed dramatically. Partnership work has matured and is expanding in many ways. Within partnership areas and within the NPS as a whole there is increasing commitment to partnerships as a means of accomplishing common goals. The 2003 Santa Fe workshop opened with four presentations to review these changes and set the workshop discussions in context.

A. Cultivating Connections to Land Stewardship

Karen Wade, then regional director for the NPS Intermountain Region, reflected on the philosophy underlying her approach to partnerships and conservation. Drawing from the writings of Aldo Leopold, she talked of the shift that occurs when people embrace a conservation ethic in their approach to managing land and resources, a shift from viewing their role as conqueror of the land to that of member and citizen of the land community. This philosophical approach led her to a model of joint citizen responsibility, rather than to the traditional paradigm of agency control of land management. For Wade this meant, in her former capacity as superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, “turning the people’s park, the Great Smoky Mountains, back to the people in a way that truly connected them to their heritage.”

Wade sees the NPS as a potential force for facilitating a conservation ethic among the broader citizenry, and views partnerships as creating opportunities for doing so. “It’s the only way to do business in today’s world,” she said. In the four years she served as regional director for the Intermountain Region, she took steps to put her partnership vision into effect regionwide as a means of engaging citizens in land stewardship (see Turley 2003 in Further Reading). Especially in the West, where there is so much public land and a large government presence, Wade believes the critical relationships the NPS needs to develop are with the citizens and communities adjacent to and within public lands. “It is only in those places where NPS staff have developed meaningful relationships within the community that we are having an effect on the way people think and feel about their responsibilities to the land and to conservation and heritage values.”

In order to better work with communities within the Intermountain Region, Wade designated a coordinator for each state. “These coordinators enable us to establish and maintain relationships that are critical for this network of people interested in preserving America’s heritage values across the landscape and for enhancing the agency role in that. And much of that is outside the boundaries of parks.” Wade also established an award program to reward people within and outside the agency for exemplary partnership work.

B. Recent Changes within the National Park Service

Ray Murray, team leader for planning and partnerships, NPS Pacific West Region, discussed specific developments within the NPS over the previous year aimed at increasing agency capacity for successful partnering. NPS Director Fran Mainella, who has emphasized the importance of partnerships to the agency’s mission, has put into effect several important partnership initiatives that will provide increasing support and coordination agency-wide for partnership efforts over the coming years. In 2002, she established a new associate director position with responsibility for partnership policy and programs across the agency. (In addition to partnerships, this position includes responsibilities for interpretation and education, volunteers, and outdoor recreation.) Associate Director Christopher Jarvi also coordinates partnership efforts with sister natural resource agencies within and outside the Department of Interior.

Director Mainella created a new agency-wide body, the NPS Partnership Council, in 2002. The council’s role is to advise her and Associate Director Jarvi on policy and issues related to partnership programs, and to facilitate communication and dialogue across the agency and with the National Park Foundation as well as other foundations, friends groups, and partners. The council’s charter states in part, “Partnerships can be used to connect people with their parks, ideas, and a conservation ethic that will sustain our parks forever. Partnerships are important in both park management and program administration because they enable us to become more effective in our work, to be more responsive to state, local, tribal, and private sector concerns, and to bring us closer to the public we serve.”

Murray, who represents the Pacific West Region on the Partnership Council, spoke of the essential work the council is doing in “mapping out partnering in the [National] Park Service” by looking at mission statements and strategic plans, roles and functions, and capacity-building. He also discussed efforts to address barriers and to develop additional training support capacity and means of disseminating information, so that the wealth of knowledge can be shared and people know where to turn to get ideas, inspiration, and mentorship.

A Working Vocabulary for NPS Partnerships



Even with veteran partnership practitioners within the NPS and partner organizations, there is often confusion about the term “partnership area.” For the NPS, the term “partnership” is used in several ways:

Within national parks, **partnerships** are increasingly important in carrying out basic missions and mandates. Many national park managers have initiated collaborations with neighboring communities and local organizations to create better communications and work on issues of mutual interest, such as visitor traffic and adjacent land development. Overall, partners in the national parks include neighboring communities, volunteers, friends groups, cooperating associations, and concession operators, as well as corporations, foundations, and others who help support park operations.

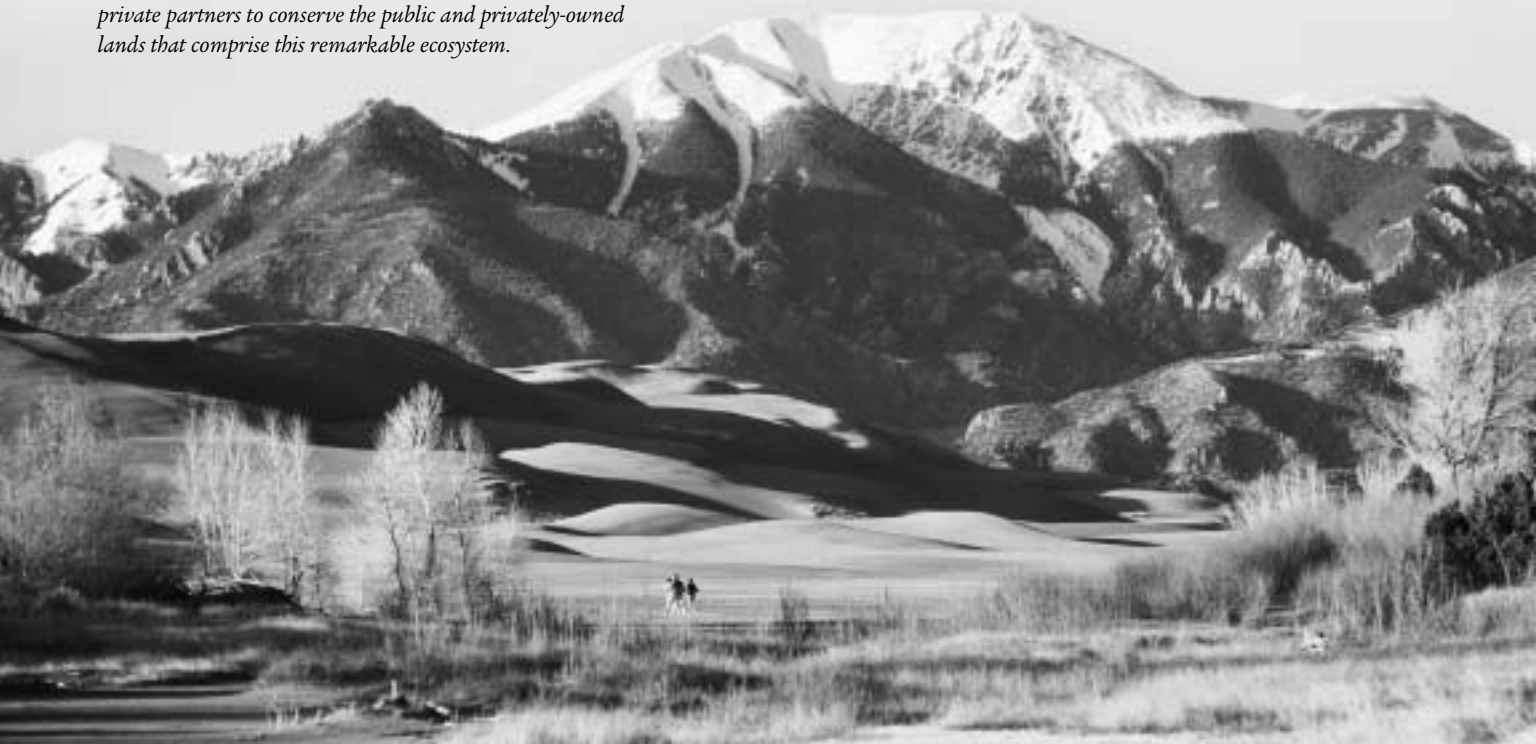
In certain congressionally authorized areas, including some national parks, national heritage areas, wild and scenic rivers, and long distance trails, the authorizing legislation specifies one or more partners to work with the NPS in planning and managing the designated area. In these **partnership areas**, the federal government is not the sole landowner, and management involves sharing responsibility. Partners may include state and other federal agencies, local governments, and local business or nonprofit organizations:

- Most national long-distance trails or designated river corridors cross land that is owned privately or by another federal agency or state or local authority, and must be administered jointly with those landowners. See case studies beginning on page 14 and page 18.
- National heritage area designation does not imply additional federal acreage, and generally a local management entity carries out conservation, interpretation, and other activities through partnerships among federal, state, and local governments and private nonprofit organizations. In this situation, the NPS provides technical and financial assistance to the local managing entity. See case study on page 16.
- Partnership parks use various formulas for the NPS to share management responsibilities, with two or more managers coordinating oversight of the lands within a boundary. See case studies on page 17 and page 19.

The term **partnership programs** refers to programs that the NPS administers outside of its role as a land manager. These programs operate from NPS regional offices and provide technical and financial assistance to states, local governments, and the private sector for such activities as historic preservation, river and trail conservation, urban parks, and recreation.

Adapted from Tuxill and Mitchell 2001

BELOW: Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve in Colorado is a partnership effort aimed at protecting the tallest dunes in North America. The NPS works with the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and many state and private partners to conserve the public and privately-owned lands that comprise this remarkable ecosystem.



A Historical Perspective on Partnership Areas

Although partnerships have been used to successfully conserve important resource areas for a number of years, the evolution of a partnership model gained momentum with the establishment of Lowell National Historical Park in Massachusetts in 1978. With Lowell's successful formula of mixing public-private investments in downtown heritage preservation with NPS expertise in visitor services and interpretive facilities, support grew in Congress to pursue parks based on collaborations with other public and private parties. Congressional interest was also heightened by the increasing desire of communities across the country to draw upon the services and resources of the NPS. As a result, in the 1980s and 1990s, many new units of the national park system were established with nontraditional formulas.

One partnership designation that has become very popular is the national heritage area, where federal, state, and local governments and private interests join together to provide conservation, interpretation, recreation, and other activities. Each national heritage area tells the stories of its residents, past and present, celebrating cultural and natural heritage and conserving special landscapes. The NPS is often a catalyst among the partners, providing technical assistance as well as financial assistance for a limited number of years following national heritage area designation. This recent history depicts an evolving conservation model that includes new roles for the NPS and a wide array of partners. As partnership models continue to evolve, the concept of a nationwide system of parks and conservation areas is becoming clearer. This concept provides an inclusive national framework for conservation that encompasses wilderness areas as well as places close to where people live and work.

Adapted from Tuxill and Mitchell 2001

C. The Partner Landscape Today

In reflecting on partnership work from the perspective of an organization that partners with the NPS, Greg Moore, executive director of Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, acknowledged a shift in thinking about partnerships within NPS and the effect this has had on him as a partner. "What's new are the degree of confidence...and the sophistication of thought about partnerships" that now exist within the agency, he noted. "Partnerships' as a concept has moved from something that individuals with creative abilities practice to something that the full institution is embracing and encouraging and teaching," a trend that Moore finds reassuring and uplifting. In describing the challenges of partnership work, he said that the promise and opportunities of partnering keep him going: "We can turn exhaustion to exhilaration, frustrations to fulfillment, and inefficiency into productivity."

Moore suggests that nonprofit partners bring important values to the public-private partnership: inclusiveness, respect, trust (both individual and institutional), generosity, public-spiritedness, and social purpose. These values become part of the "bedrock" of partnership with the NPS, enhancing the partner relationship and helping to make the collaborative work more relevant to the general public. Over the long term, he sees the ability to achieve the very core of the NPS mission—to maintain a sense of place and preserve cultural heritage and ecological systems—as dependent on partnership work.

The multiplier effect of partnerships gives Moore the most hope for the future. "At Golden Gate [National Recreation Area] it began with one volunteer," he said. "We now have 10,000 volunteers who contribute more than 300,000 hours of time." Take the first step, Moore has found, and "great things can happen." Starting with an initiative to restore native plants and the concept that people might care enough about their place to get involved, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy has sparked a coalition of 30 community-based organizations that today are actively engaged in the park. Through these efforts, the conservancy has inspired young people of diverse backgrounds to be of service to their national parks, and also to take the lessons they have learned back to their own communities and neighborhoods. Moore believes the three principles that underlie the Conservancy's partnership work represent values fundamental to all partnerships: "We will act with integrity, we will speak with many voices, and we will value many ways of knowing."

D. An International Perspective

Jessica Brown, vice president for international programs at the Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment, presented a global perspective on parks and protected areas. Examining trends in the U.S. and internationally, she discussed parallels that exist in the increasing use of partnerships and collaborative management in protected areas worldwide (see Table 1). Both here and abroad, private land conservation organizations are emerging as important partners for government agencies. Moreover, government is working much more closely with local and indigenous communities, managing protected areas with, and in some cases turning management over to, local people. Many protected areas are relying on collaborative management approaches, in which management responsibility is shared among stakeholders. The workshop participants discussed how these trends are reflected in the areas where they are working.

Internationally, there is growing acceptance that protected areas must be managed not as islands but as part of a network. Within the U.S. National Park Service, this concept has surfaced most recently in the vision of a national network of parks and open spaces across America (see National Park System Advisory

Board 2001 in Further Reading). Thinking along these lines leads one to look at the gaps in the national system of protected areas. Echoing earlier comments by Karen Wade, Brown stated, “So much of what’s important now with partnerships is not just within the boundaries of our protected areas but outside of them.” She noted that there is now recognition of the importance of protected areas that have been created by indigenous and local communities. These “community-conserved areas” draw on traditional and/or local knowledge and resource management systems and rely on stewardship by people living in or near these places. In general these areas have not experienced the problems that have faced conventional national parks in many parts of the world.

One difference in partnership work in other countries is that protected areas are viewed not just as belonging to nations and valuable in a community context; they are also viewed as valuable in a global context. Brown noted that, while in the U.S. there is increasing recognition of the value of partnership areas to states and local communities, recognition of their value to the international community lags behind. She believes it is important to see our country’s conservation efforts as connected to the efforts of other countries to protect the world’s cultural and natural heritage.

Table 1. The Shift in Approach to Protected Area Management, 1970 and 2002

	<i>As it was: protected areas were...</i>	<i>As it is becoming: protected areas are...</i>
Objectives	Set aside for conservation Established mainly for spectacular wildlife and scenic protection Managed mainly for visitors and tourists Valued as wilderness About protection	Run also with social and economic objectives Often set up for scientific, economic, and cultural reasons Managed with local people more in mind Valued for the cultural importance of so-called wilderness Also about restoration and rehabilitation
Governance	Run by central government	Run by many partners
Local people	Planned and managed against people Managed without regard to local opinions	Run with, for, and in some cases by local people Managed to meet the needs of local people
Wider context	Developed separately Managed as “islands”	Planned as part of national, regional, and international systems Developed as “networks” (strictly protected areas, buffered and linked by green corridors)
Perceptions	Viewed primarily as a national asset Viewed only as a national concern	Viewed also as a community asset Viewed also as an international concern
Management techniques	Managed reactively within a short timescale Managed in a technocratic way	Managed adaptively with a long-term perspective Managed with political considerations
Finance	Paid for by taxpayers	Paid for from many sources
Management skills	Managed by scientists and natural resource experts Expert-led	Managed by multiskilled individuals Drawing on local knowledge

From Phillips 2003

FIELD • TRIP

Proposed Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area

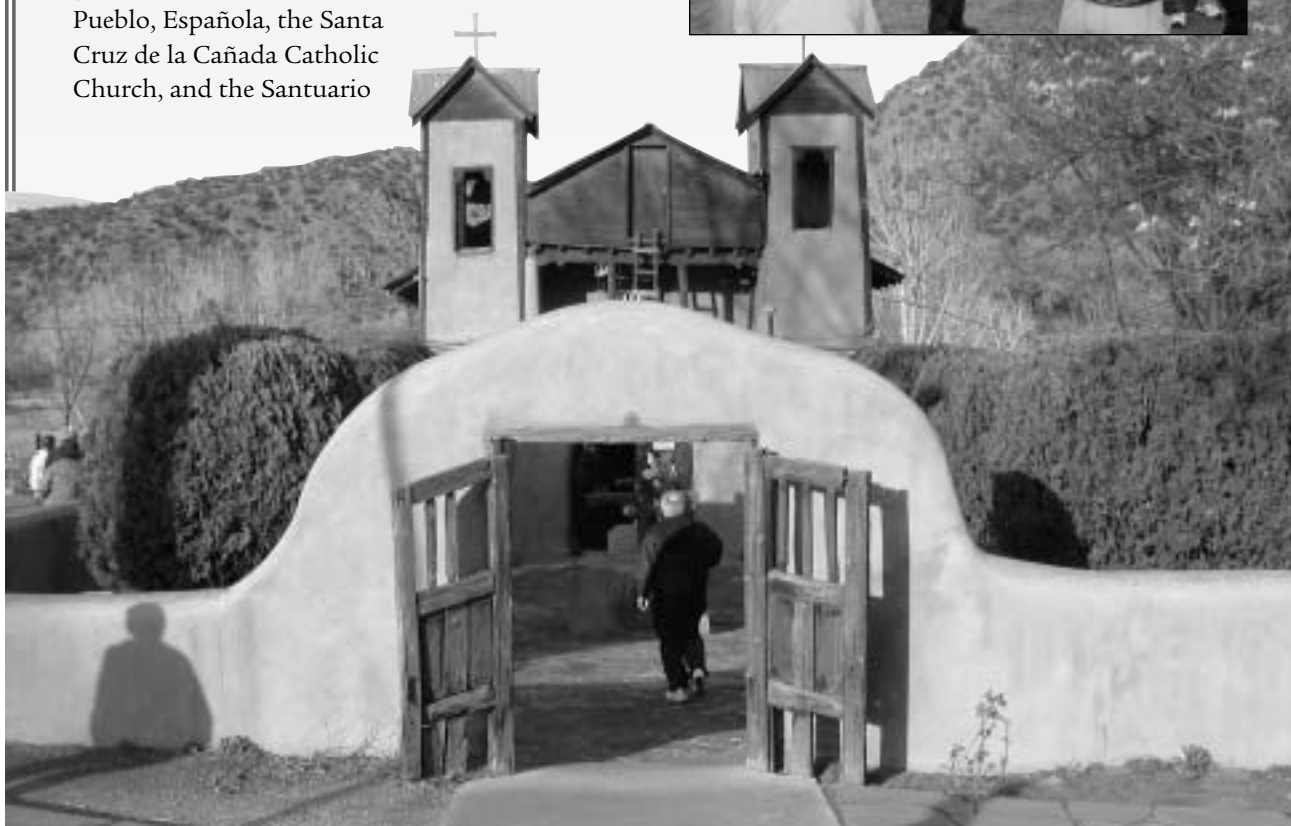
The NPS New Mexico office hosted a field trip to the proposed Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area on the afternoon before the workshop officially convened. The proposed heritage area, currently under consideration by Congress, would recognize and celebrate the rich multicultural heritage of the Rio Grande region of northern New Mexico (Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Taos Counties). Included would be eight American Indian pueblos dating back several centuries and numerous present-day Hispanic settlements that date back to 1598 (the Spanish colonial period). The heritage area would be managed by the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, Inc., working in partnership with the National Park Service, participating pueblos, community organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies. The mission of this nonprofit organization is “to celebrate a distinctive landscape where people have made historical, social, and cultural contributions which represent a significant part of the multicultural mosaic of the American people.”

Workshop participants, along with several board members of the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, Inc., and other invited guests, visited San Juan Pueblo, Española, the Santa Cruz de la Cañada Catholic Church, and the Santuario

de Chimayó. These sites represent the diversity of the region and provided opportunities for participants to learn about the challenges and opportunities involved in preparing for a designated national heritage area that seeks to represent multiple cultures and a complex history of interrelationships and coexistence. The field trip provided a shared context and a real-life point of reference for participants as they examined partnership lessons over the two days of the workshop.

INSET: Herman Agoyo (center), former governor of San Juan Pueblo, telling the story of San Gabriel del Yunge Oweenge, the first European settlement (ca. 1598) among the Indian Pueblos.

BELOW: El Santuario de Chimayó, a National Historic Landmark located in the village of Chimayó on the “high road” to Taos, is one of the most visited sites in the proposed national heritage area. The sands on which the 19th century adobe chapel is built are reputed to have miraculous healing powers.



Western Perspectives on Partnerships and Partnership Areas

Workshop participants provided some illuminating observations on how the opportunities and challenges of partnership areas and partnership work in the western U.S. can differ from those in other parts of the country. The following is a synthesis of their comments:

- ⌚ *The West has large land areas and comparatively small populations. This situation creates a capacity challenge for the managers of public lands and for the volunteers who help carry the partnerships forward.*
- ⌚ *“Living culture” in the West is different from living culture elsewhere in the United States. The mechanisms to deal with those values may be different from one part of the country to another. Partnerships must relate to the historical contexts.*
- ⌚ *Attitudes toward federal involvement and the pace of life are different. There is a lot more groundwork to do before you get to a point where you are really talking about a partnership.*
- ⌚ *In applying partnership principles, one must first and foremost be a member of the community and deemed a good neighbor. This brings a credibility that then begins to define how the partnership will unfold. Once you establish that personal relationship, it becomes bedrock.*
- ⌚ *The West includes vast tracts of public land that are managed by various federal agencies for very different goals or as multi-use areas. The public is accustomed to having access to public lands for a variety of purposes, and feels a certain sense of entitlement. Although recreational interests are growing, the older economic interests remain and are represented by large constituencies who use the public lands to make a living directly from extractable resources. This situation calls for a strong partnership ethic among the federal agencies as well as very close coordination with local governments and communities. It also calls for educational efforts to help communities better understand current economic trends, so they can more fully embrace natural history and cultural heritage as contributors to local economies.*
- ⌚ *The West’s contribution to American history has been undervalued. There are people and whole populations who have a long, long connection to the land—their forebears created the history, whether 200 years ago or 10,000 years ago. This history that goes back generations, while it is felt a little in the East, it is felt more deeply in the West.*
- ⌚ *The West has many different dimensions. Ninety percent of the people west of the Rockies live within 15 miles of the Interstate Highway 5 corridor just inland from the Pacific coast. The population density in California contrasts greatly with that of Nevada, which has only a few high growth spots like Las Vegas and Reno.*
- ⌚ *The character of a national park as it relates to the community can be different in the West, where the park is a major destination and is surrounded by very small communities. In the East many parks are not the major destination but are part of the community. This influences the public land–community relationship.*
- ⌚ *Although national heritage areas are relatively new to the West, they are attractive to westerners. People feel heritage areas provide an opportunity to put themselves back in the landscape and back in control through the process of heritage area planning.*
- ⌚ *National heritage areas probably haven’t developed earlier in the West because of the suspicion of federal agency involvement. Heritage areas represent a great opportunity to reintroduce the federal government to western communities in a way that is acceptable to the communities and that empowers federal agencies to do things that people want.*



Laura Gates, superintendent of Cane River Creole National Historical Park, during one of the workshop’s reflective “assignments.”

a. Creole women on the porch of the historic Badin-Roque House, now within Cane River National Heritage Area in Louisiana. The heritage area and Cane River Creole National Historical Park work together to preserve the region's unique cultures that are rooted in a wealth of living traditions based on colonial origins.

b. The "parting of the ways" along the Oregon and California National Historic Trails in western Wyoming, where the right fork led to Fort Hall and Oregon Territory and the left to Fort Bridger and California.

c. The Yuma Crossing National Historic Landmark, the historic center of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, reflects the area's confluence of Hispanic, Native American, and Anglo cultures. Shown here is the Saint Thomas Mission, an important landmark structure located on Quechan Indian Nation land overlooking the Lower Colorado River.

d. As part of a two-year site restoration effort managed by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy at Crissy Field in Golden Gate National Recreation Area, volunteers from schools, corporations, and civic organizations transplanted more than 100,000 native plants to help restore natural systems.

e. An historic log acequia flume, along the high road to Taos in Las Trampas, New Mexico, within the proposed Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area. Acequia systems, established centuries ago for communal management of water and crop production, are a distinctive feature of the region's cultural landscape and remain in active use today.

f. NPS fire and interpretation employees work a prescribed burn in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, one of the California State Parks units within Redwood National and State Parks.

g. In 2000, Zion National Park and the adjacent town of Springdale, Utah, jointly instituted a free shuttle bus service that now provides the sole mode of transportation for most peak season park visitors. The bus, which serves the town, park campgrounds and visitor facilities, and the highly visited river canyon (seen here), has lessened traffic congestion and increased visitation in Springdale.



e.



III. Capturing the Lessons Learned

Heritage areas extend the reach and impact of the NPS far beyond the borders of [national parks]. Integrating the values of conservation and historic preservation into the everyday life of communities is invaluable.

— Charles Flynn, Executive Director
Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Corporation

No one agency or organization has the full range of resources needed to accomplish its primary mission alone. Partnerships provide the most effective avenue to reach across jurisdictions and organizations to accomplish broad goals.

— Ken Mabery, then NPS representative,
Northwest Forest Plan



f.



g.

The Santa Fe workshop provided an opportunity for practitioners to reflect on and discuss with their peers the insights they have gained through their partnership work. Understanding of this work grows as practitioners explore similarities and differences in their experiences, what they have learned about successful partnerships, and how to improve the effectiveness of partnership work. This chapter presents information gathered through workshop discussions and case studies presented at the workshop, followed by a synthesis of components that characterize successful partnership areas.

A. Assessing Partnerships by Partnership Area Type

In order to look more closely at what was happening on the ground, participants met in discussion groups based on partnership area type (national heritage areas, national long-distance trails and national rivers, and partnership parks). The following discussion represents a snapshot of participants' thoughts on what is working well and why, and the challenges that remain. There was considerable agreement among the discussion groups.



1. What is working?

Participants generally felt that within agencies and the general public there was growing understanding and acceptance of partnerships as a means of protecting and managing land and heritage values. Partnership areas of all types are effectively engaging people in connecting with and conserving resources at the landscape and community level. The potential for increased local engagement in stewardship of natural and cultural heritage is large. Using heritage areas as an example, 45 million people across the U.S. live within a national heritage area. Workshop participants agreed that there is good communication among many partners and that trust and openness in these relationships are increasing. In one partnership park, the collaboration has become so institutionalized that the staff "wouldn't want to go back to the old way of doing business."

National heritage areas are engaging people where they live and work, enabling them to tell their stories and conserve what they value.

The passion and connection people develop for rivers and trails can be leveraged into empowerment to act in other areas as well. They recognize that working together they can accomplish a higher level of protection.

[In partnership parks] partners bring strengths from different skills and knowledge bases. This results in better ideas and a richer approach.

Participants believe that because of the partnerships both resources and visitors are better served. In heritage areas the dialogue taking place is helping to build bridges in communities where historically dialogue may have been difficult and stories contested. Heritage areas are helping to create a unified community voice and are having a positive economic impact at the local level. Visions are better articulated for individual national trails and national rivers as well as systemwide, and more tools are available to achieve the vision. There is greater flexibility in how national heritage areas form and are administered and funded. The connections between national heritage areas and national parks are growing, as seen in the greater role that park superintendents play in providing support to heritage area staff and vice versa, even where the park is not within or contiguous to the heritage area.

2. Why is it working?

There is enthusiasm and commitment from individuals and partner organizations, as well as leadership by individuals at the local level and by NPS staff. There is more dialogue taking place at the community level where people feel they can make a difference. They feel a sense of pride and ownership in what is happening on the ground.

Partners tend to capitalize on each other's strengths, such as the national image and professionalism of the National Park Service, and the ability of partner organizations to move quickly and reach out to the community.

[Joint] visioning pulls out elements of people's passion for the resources and provides focus and buy-in opportunities, enabling partners to bring their strengths together to make the vision a reality.

There is an increasing body of experience from which to draw lessons, a growing partnership toolbox, and an emerging set of best practices that is being replicated in different contexts.

Participants believe they are better able to communicate the benefits of partnerships, and can link the benefits to the missions of partner institutions. The relationships between partnering institutions are deepening, and the administrative machinery is working better. With taxpayers demanding efficiency, partnerships have bipartisan appeal and support. Lean operations magnify the importance of each person's contributions to the partnership.

3. What challenges remain?

With national heritage areas, the grassroots enthusiasm and political support is not yet balanced by sustained NPS leadership and support. There is inconsistency across NPS regions in how things are done, and perceived bureaucratic barriers and lack of commitment from NPS upper-level management. A perception lingers in some NPS quarters that heritage areas take funding away from park units at a time when park needs are dire. On the community side, there is a need to deal with longstanding mistrust between groups, and with misperceptions that arise from communicating across cultures and experiences, both at the community level and between communities and the NPS.

In national heritage areas, sustaining and building nonprofit governing boards over time and finding new people and preparing them for leadership are continuing problems.

The NPS planning process and regulatory requirements seem complicated and difficult to NPS partners and are not easily transferable to areas managed through partnerships.

The administrative machinery is still unable to keep up with the creativity of partnerships.

There are still challenges for agency staff and nonfederal partners in working together. Agency staff and partners at times are not empowered, and at times act too independently. Consistent follow-through is difficult due to staff continuity issues and funding that is low initially and does not grow. The need to cultivate support for partnerships remains. Bureaucratic inflexibility still exists, as well as the fear that partnerships will weaken the authority of the NPS. There is often a knee-jerk resistance to partnerships, and it can be difficult to get federal advisory committees appointed. There is an ongoing need to manage inclusively and make room for more partners, and to guard against partner relationships becoming exclusive. There is also a need to identify and deal with hidden agendas to keep them from undermining trust. Keeping resources and priorities aligned is a challenge. Funding and staffing tend to be opportunistic and the mandates for partnerships are not matched with resources. There is a constant need to bring new employees up to speed regarding vision, expectations, and skills, and to guard against a vision that is too narrow, which can place managers in unintended “boxes.” An overriding focus on the partnership process can, at times, get in the way of telling success stories and talking about intangible benefits.

FACING PAGE: Rick Sermon (left) and Andy Ringgold (right), partners in Redwood National and State Parks.

BELOW: Participants in the Santa Fe “Collaboration and Conservation” workshop met in the Santa Fe room of the La Fonda Hotel, a national historic landmark.



B. Case Studies

To enhance the opportunities to learn from firsthand experience, several participants shared stories of their own work. The following five partnership area case studies contributed to the discussion of lessons learned.

BELOW: El Camino Real interpretive signage has a unique historical character based on a design from the 1950s. Today, the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office is working with federal and state partners to rehabilitate and update the signs along this national historic trail.

BOTTOM, LEFT: The historic community of San Elizario provided safe haven and supplies for travelers along El Camino Real for centuries. The congregation of the San Elizario mission (seen here) dates to the late 1600s. The church, the County of El Paso, and the community of San Elizario work with the BLM and NPS to interpret this site.

BOTTOM, RIGHT: Boy Scouts lower flag over historic Fort Craig, on El Camino Real south of Socorro, New Mexico. This 150-year-old fort, a national historic site administered by the BLM, provided protection for travelers on the old wagon road from Santa Fe to Chihuahua, Mexico. Today, the fort is “manned” by Scouts on work/camp weekends, Civil War buffs, and volunteers eager to tell the story of the trail.



El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail

From 1598 to 1882, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro provided an important 1600-mile link between Mexico City and Santa Fe. This route aided exploration, colonization, economic develop-

ment, and subsequent cultural interactions among Spanish, Anglo, and native peoples. In the decade leading up to the October 2000 congressional designation of El Camino Real as a national historic trail, both the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the NPS had been involved in some way with the trail. Shortly after designation, the BLM New Mexico state director and the NPS regional director wrote a memo to Interior Secretary Babbitt suggesting that the new national trail be jointly administered by the two agencies. Although the two agencies had previously worked closely together on national trails, El Camino Real is the first instance of a jointly administered trail. Education was key to successfully launching the joint effort, including acquainting staff with the missions and administrative procedures of the partner agencies. In the last three years the BLM and NPS have been carrying out a public involvement process to develop a vision and a comprehensive management plan. As of this writing, the draft comprehensive management plan has been reviewed by the interested public, and CARTA, the Camino Real Trail Association, has formed to act as a public advocate for the trail.



LESSONS LEARNED

- ☞ Talk through everything until you are comfortable with the joint process. Most agency partnerships begin with a cooperative agreement detailing each agency's specific responsibilities. In this case, there was a commitment at the regional level in both agencies to a true joint process—a *commingling* of roles and responsibilities rather than a division of roles and responsibilities between agencies.
 - ☞ Understand that our job as managers is to further a Camino Real mission, not a BLM mission or an NPS mission.
 - ☞ Find ways to ensure equity between the partners and to signal the uniqueness of joint administration. This means careful attention to such things as vocabulary and titles (there is no "NPS superintendent" of El Camino Real), office space and location, and the details of decisionmaking and communication (both internal and external).
 - ☞ Communication is our most important product—between the two lead agency staff, within and between agencies so they will take time to understand the program, and with the general public so they will understand what we are trying to do. There may be a need to reassure both staff and constituents regarding the "new" role.
 - ☞ Understand each other's stake. Value each partner's interest in the resource, respect each other's history of involvement, and learn from and use each other's strengths and resources. Agree to not let the system work against the partnership.
 - ☞ Consciously strive for a working relationship based on openness, mutual trust, and respect. Work to institutionalize that relationship so that someone else coming in has to carry through in the same spirit of cooperation. Trust needs to go higher than just the on-the-ground partnership.
 - ☞ Keep an open mind and be flexible—not only at the local level, but on up the agency line. Flexibility is paramount in addressing issues and problems; for instance, does your way of following procedures really matter or can it be done the way the partner would prefer? Is this a short-term problem that you have to worry about right now or will it indeed be resolved in the future?
 - ☞ Take the time early on to learn about each agency's constituent groups (in the general public). Understand how the agencies are perceived publicly by these groups, and how the agencies differ in their approach to working with them. Anticipate what concerns these constituent groups might have.
 - ☞ Seek to understand the nature of your grassroots support and to build a broad base. Open lines of communication with constituent groups and establish bridges with stakeholders *before* having something on the table.
 - ☞ In administering a partnership area that includes many different landowners, be aware of other ongoing efforts and processes that can be incorporated into your own efforts.
 - ☞ In working with the public and with partners beyond the primary agencies, share the process with all who are interested and want to be part of the picture. Appeal to all cultures; ask them to tell their stories.
 - ☞ Be patient. Keep the bigger picture in mind—the partnership is a long-term process and you are here for the long haul. Keep reaching out all the time, no matter what stage of the project.
- Harry Myers, NPS lead, and Sarah Schlanger, BLM lead
El Camino Real National Historic Trail

Two historic travel routes can be seen in this photo—historic Route 66 (the dirt road at left center) and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (the faint depression on the flats in the distance).



Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area

Historically, prior to dam-building, the Colorado River spread miles wide along what is now the lower Arizona–California border. Yuma Crossing was the only place to cross safely over quicksand. The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area was authorized in October 2000 along a five-mile stretch of the river. The heritage area is grounded in a 30-year-long community desire to reconnect with the city’s riverfront, and a 1990s broad-based citizen initiative to improve the riverfront and



The Colorado River at Yuma, Arizona, prior to dam-building.

preserve historic “old” Yuma. All this community ferment ultimately resulted in the successful passage by Congress of authorizing legislation for a national her-

itage area. The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Corporation was incorporated in early 2002 as the management entity for the heritage area. The 11-member board reflects a broad cross-section of the community, including businesses, governments, historic preservationists, conservationists, community-based organizations, and the many cultures of the Yuma region. The Heritage Area Corporation’s five-year plan includes restoration of historic buildings, development of a riverfront Gateway Park, and an ambitious restoration of 1,400 acres of wetlands along the river. This latter initiative, the East Wetlands Restoration Project, brings together 28 stakeholders, including federal and state agencies, local governments, farmers, and the Quechan Indian Nation, which owns 40 percent of the land. The Heritage Area Corporation has used community support and the heritage area designation to leverage significant dollars for these efforts, and has achieved partnerships where there has been no history of collaboration.

LESSONS LEARNED

- 🕒 Strong grassroots support—and a local government entity willing to commit resources and credibility to the effort—can be key to navigating the bureaucratic process and raising needed funds.
- 🕒 To gain support from key stakeholders, you must first view the project from *their* points of view. Unless you demonstrate that you are putting their concerns first, stakeholders will not take the first step toward consensus. Listen to what people want, understand what they most fear, and make sure that the project meets these concerns and needs.
- 🕒 Building buy-in and consensus among key local stakeholders takes time, patience, and persistence. With the local entities unified, it is easier to approach federal and state agencies.
- 🕒 To build consensus requires a neutral and trusted body. An improving relationship is only as strong as the most recent evidence that trust has been earned. Assume that your relationships are fragile and operate that way.
- 🕒 Once trust has been nurtured among stakeholders, the working relationships established in this atmosphere of partnership can extend to new venues. Success in one venue can change the course of the partnership and change partners’ perspectives in ways not initially envisioned.
- 🕒 Make sure that your plan advances the goals and meets the mission of the various governmental partners. Give these agencies the opportunity to take advantage of your private sector entrepreneurship and ability to get projects done quickly.
- 🕒 Flexibility and a “lighter bureaucratic NPS hand,” as well as a trust in the local process and players, is essential to maintaining the enthusiasm and initiative that help drive the local engine. This is true at both the regional level as well as with NPS staff assigned on the ground (e.g., NPS staff who provide early technical assistance).
- 🕒 Having an understanding and supportive NPS partner (in the case of Yuma Crossing, this is the superintendent of Organ Pipe National Monument) on the heritage area team is invaluable in helping move through the administrative requirements and in expediting funds.

— Charles Flynn, Executive Director
Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Corporation

Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, located on Whidbey Island in Washington's Puget Sound, was established in 1978 to protect a cultural landscape that was threatened by the pressures of development. Unlike the more traditional units of the national park system, people live and work within this landscape, much like national parks in the U.K. There was very little NPS involvement in the establishment of Ebey's Landing; citizen initiative was the driving force. The strong local voice featured as well in



determining the role laid out for the agency. A multi-party agreement among federal, state, county, and local partners established a joint administrative board with the mission of managing the reserve. Ebey's Landing became the first unit of the national park system to be managed by a "trust board" of individuals representing the NPS and state, county, and local government. Since the reserve's establishment, the land, farms, and structures have remained largely in private ownership. To fulfill the management goal of preserving the historic landscape of open space, farmland, and settlements, partners have relied on such land conservation tools as purchase or exchange of development rights, purchase of scenic easements, land donations, tax incentives, zoning, and local design review. The challenge of this partnership lies in guiding and managing change in a way that respects the cultural values and historic landscape.

LESSONS LEARNED

- ⌚ The trend within the NPS toward increased complexity of management creates strains on small partnership parks like Ebey's Landing. It is beneficial to establish a close working relationship with someone within the agency's leadership who understands collaboration and is comfortable with sharing control.
- ⌚ Having NPS leadership that is strong and flexible enough to accept and work with a different park model has been essential to the effectiveness of Ebey's Landing.
- ⌚ In a consensus process each partner needs to understand that no one partner is in charge and to accept that no one will get everything they want. With trust board management (joint administration), each board member has to take off her "representative of" coat and put on a "trust board" coat.
- ⌚ In a partnership, a mission statement agreed to by all partners is critical to resolving issues. Be prepared to use it a lot and keep talking.
- ⌚ With joint management, expect to spend a lot of time discussing standards (whose and what) and vocabulary.
- ⌚ In the early stages, continuity is key to successfully charting the course. In later stages, continuity is still important, but a change in board members can be helpful, especially in a changing environment like Ebey's Landing.
- ⌚ Try not to be too dependent on or too identified with any one partner; get contributions from all. In carrying out projects, use the strengths of each partner. At Ebey's Landing, the key partner in assuring quality, continuity, and professionalism has been the NPS.
- ⌚ Work with fiscal cycles and the ebb and flow in partners' strengths, especially the more local partners, even to the extent of changing the work plan if necessary. This takes flexibility.
- ⌚ Maintaining strong local support is critical. This requires meaningful opportunities for local involvement and constant education and outreach addressing the concerns of people who live and work in the landscape.
- ⌚ Little beginnings can grow into big successes. Successful projects (even small ones) can help build relationships and carry over into new projects and new partners.

— Rob Harbour, Reserve Manager
Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River

The Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River is located along the Texas–Mexico border, where the river forms the international boundary, starting in Big Bend National Park and running downstream 200 miles.

The designation is only on the U.S. side to the center of the river, which complicates river management. Of the designated shoreline, 51 percent is privately owned and 49 percent is in public ownership. At the time of designation in 1978, there was no local support; in fact every landowner group in the area opposed it. A draft management plan that was drawn up by the NPS soon after designation went nowhere. A hostile standoff of sorts existed for almost 20 years, with the big issues



being fear of federal use of condemnation authority and disagreement over proposed management boundaries. In 1999 planning began again in earnest on a general management plan (GMP) for the river. A partnership team approach was proposed

to oversee the planning and public comment process, and a Rio Grande partnership team was formed, representing a wide range of river stakeholders. In the initial public meetings that followed, deauthorization of the river was pushed heavily by landowner groups. Careful relationship-building with a key partnership team member, however, shifted the dynamic and ultimately led to a calmer environment in which a framework for landowner agreements—a foundation for the GMP—was negotiated. In May 2003 the first landowner agreement was signed and six more are now pending signature. These landowner agreements, which protect most of the private reaches and the critical river put-in and take-out locations, will demonstrate protection of the river in the yet-to-be-released draft GMP. A record of decision is anticipated in May 2004.

LESSONS LEARNED

- ⌚ If you are working toward a certain project future, you must understand and acknowledge the past.
- ⌚ “Bring in thine enemies.” Seek ways to bring in key stakeholders who question NPS motives, and help them see what you are working toward. Keep the process transparent and above board, and keep everyone working through the process. This takes constant communication.
- ⌚ Develop personal relationships with individual players.
- ⌚ Look for someone well connected to local interests who is willing to champion the cause. The NPS can promote the value of partnership efforts, but until community representatives and other partners see the benefits, we are spinning our wheels.
- ⌚ Partnership efforts help level the playing field. If the land management agency comes to the table as an equal, there will be a better chance for success. “Don’t come in on a power trip.”
- ⌚ Seek areas of common ground and work from there. With the Rio Grande, everyone wanted to retain the wild nature of the river and the canyons—the “outstandingly remarkable values.”
- ⌚ Open, neutral decisionmaking is important; use the same neutral facilitator throughout the process.
- ⌚ Understand the perspectives and stakes of each player. Be clear on the most important aspects of your project and what is most important for local interests, then stay flexible in seeking agreement.
- ⌚ Flexibility in working with private landowners is essential, including within the planning process. Problems are guaranteed in management if the administrative land manager cannot let go of citing federal regulations.
- ⌚ Flexibility at levels up the NPS chain of command is critical, as is the ability to work in gray areas.
- ⌚ Recognize that building relationships takes a tremendous amount of time, and that effective partnership planning rarely happens on bureaucratic timelines.

— Attila Bality, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance
NPS Sante Fe Office

Redwood National and State Parks

When Congress created Redwood National Park in 1968, including in its boundaries three California state parks dating to the 1920s, it envisioned single-agency management by the National Park Service. Over the years, various proposals were considered to convey management or fee ownership of the state parks from the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) to the NPS, but no transfer occurred. A 1994 report by the California Coordinating Committee on Operational



Efficiencies explored joint operations and cost savings at three NPS/CDPR park clusters, including Redwood. The report, adopted by the two agencies, recommended that the four units within Redwood National Park be designated Redwood National and State Parks (RNSP) and managed under a joint agreement.

It also advised that a state park liaison superintendent with day-to-day operational authority over the three state parks be “duty-stationed” at national park headquarters. Over the next two years, considerable energy went into defining the new relationship, including a facilitated team-building process that led to a common mission, vision, and guiding principles through which everyone could understand the meaning of the partnership, and from which flowed efforts to mesh operations and eliminate duplication. In 2000 the two agencies completed a joint general management plan for RNSP that set a future management direction for the four parks. A 2001 accomplishments report stated that the partnership was well established and “now permeates all major programs and operations.”

LESSONS LEARNED

- ⌚ Locating key partner staff in the same office enhances partnership effectiveness and success due to more frequent communications and interactions.
 - ⌚ A successful, productive partnership requires considerable time and energy and continuous work.
 - ⌚ Build a partnership identity early on with all employees; buy-in is important, including from employee unions. Use employee meetings to build and strengthen the partnership.
 - ⌚ Develop a joint vision early on. An established, agreed-upon purpose is essential if disagreement, challenge, or stress occurs, and can help refocus direction and realign priorities if necessary.
 - ⌚ View the partnership as a means toward jointly accomplishing bigger, longer-range objectives, not a goal or an end to itself.
 - ⌚ Partners should be considered equal in resolving issues related to the partnership and its mission. Achieving equality and trust between partners often requires overcoming individual and organizational egos and relinquishing control.
 - ⌚ A positive partnership evolution depends heavily on the creativity and motivation of key staff. Partnerships ultimately succeed or fail because of the attitudes, energies, and relationships of individuals, not the organizational relationships.
 - ⌚ The management and administrative framework for the partnership must provide sufficient flexibility and discretion to pursue various routes to success. Rigid guidelines and sideboards constrain creativity, experimentation, and adaptive management.
 - ⌚ Having partners with similar missions enhances the potential for success. Even with closely aligned missions, challenges can come from different agency methods and cultures. Partners should seek relief from policy or legal constraints that inhibit the ability to achieve common goals.
 - ⌚ Recruit and hire people who thrive in nontraditional organizations and partnerships.
 - ⌚ Joint projects developed by field staff show the message is permeating; reward those who “get it.”
 - ⌚ Partners starting the relationship from scratch may have better success initially than those who have coexisted with a history that includes conflict or other baggage that must be processed.
 - ⌚ Joint planning efforts provide partnership-building opportunities and can be a key element to success.
- Andy Ringgold, then NPS Superintendent and Rick Sermon, State Parks Superintendent, Redwood National and State Parks

C. Components of Successful Partnership Areas

The discussion that follows is a distillation drawn from various sources: the case studies prepared for the workshop, participants' responses to pre-workshop questions, and the workshop dialogue from both the large group and smaller working groups. These points, many of them interconnected, surfaced repeatedly as important components in successful partnership areas.

1. A shared vision is created through the full engagement of all partners.

A shared vision helps "assure that the partnership serves as a means to an agreed-upon end and is not

viewed as an end unto itself," observed Andy Ringgold, then NPS superintendent of Redwood National and State Parks. Several participants noted that having a common vision and agreement on goals helped overcome tendencies to protect turf, and during times of difficulty and stress can help to refocus direction and realign priorities if necessary. Ray Murray, planning and partnerships team leader in the NPS Pacific West Region, suggested that the shared vision can grow as the partnership evolves and should be revisited and refreshed periodically. The vision must include a long-term view, according to Ken Mabery, then NPS representative on the Northwest Forest Plan, and its strategic plans must outlive changes in personnel, said Sharon Brown, then interpretive specialist with the Santa Fe office of the National Trails System.

2. Ownership of the partnership is felt throughout each partner organization.

David Welch, past president of the Oregon-California Trails Association, said that partnerships do not work unless the partners are committed to a *real* partnership. Tracy Fortmann, superintendent of Fort Clatsop National Memorial, said all partners must "fully embrace the goals and mission of the partnership" as well as the roles and responsibilities of each partner. Karen Wade, then regional director of the NPS Intermountain Region, observed that when a partnership is strong and successful, "partnership culture and vision permeate all entities, not just the executive or champion." Wade went further, saying that partners who are successful "understand and respect the institutional culture of each other but find a new operating culture that fosters a strong partnership ethic."

3. There is a genuine commitment to sharing responsibility in problem-solving and decisionmaking.

Many participants stressed the fundamental importance of sharing responsibility. Ray Murray stated that "from the start the NPS in [partnership] situations needs to be a catalyst and empower others and share responsibility rather than be in control." Sharing control is linked to the sense that both partners share in resolving problems and making decisions. As Welch said, "It is not a partnership if one side is making all the decisions." This equal stake was expressed clearly by Redwood National and State Parks partners Andy Ringgold and Rick Sermon, State Parks Superintendent. "Partners, regardless of their respective capabilities or

Principles for Forging Long-Term Partnerships

Participants in the first "Collaboration and Conservation" workshop held in 2000 in Vermont described principles for building long-term partnerships:

- ① *Listen and be responsive to the needs of others.*
- ② *Build relationships and sustain trust.*
- ③ *Work openly and inclusively in ways that build a partnership team.*
- ④ *Be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances.*
- ⑤ *Be willing to share control, and work together in ways that empower the partners.*
- ⑥ *Have a realistic understanding of each partner's mission and perspective, and seek to resolve issues in ways satisfactory to all parties.*
- ⑦ *Build a common understanding and vision.*
- ⑧ *Tell the stories of people and place, providing accurate, well-focused information.*
- ⑨ *Maintain continuity and transfer knowledge.*
- ⑩ *Develop ways to continually share experience and understanding.*
- ⑪ *Celebrate successes.*

From Tuxill and Mitchell 2001

contributions to the partnership, should be considered equal in resolving issues related to the partnership and its mission. Achieving equality and trust between partners often requires burying individual and organizational egos and giving up control.” Attila Bality, outdoor recreation planner for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program in the NPS Santa Fe office, believes that a sense of partner equality increases chances for success and that partnership efforts help level the playing field.

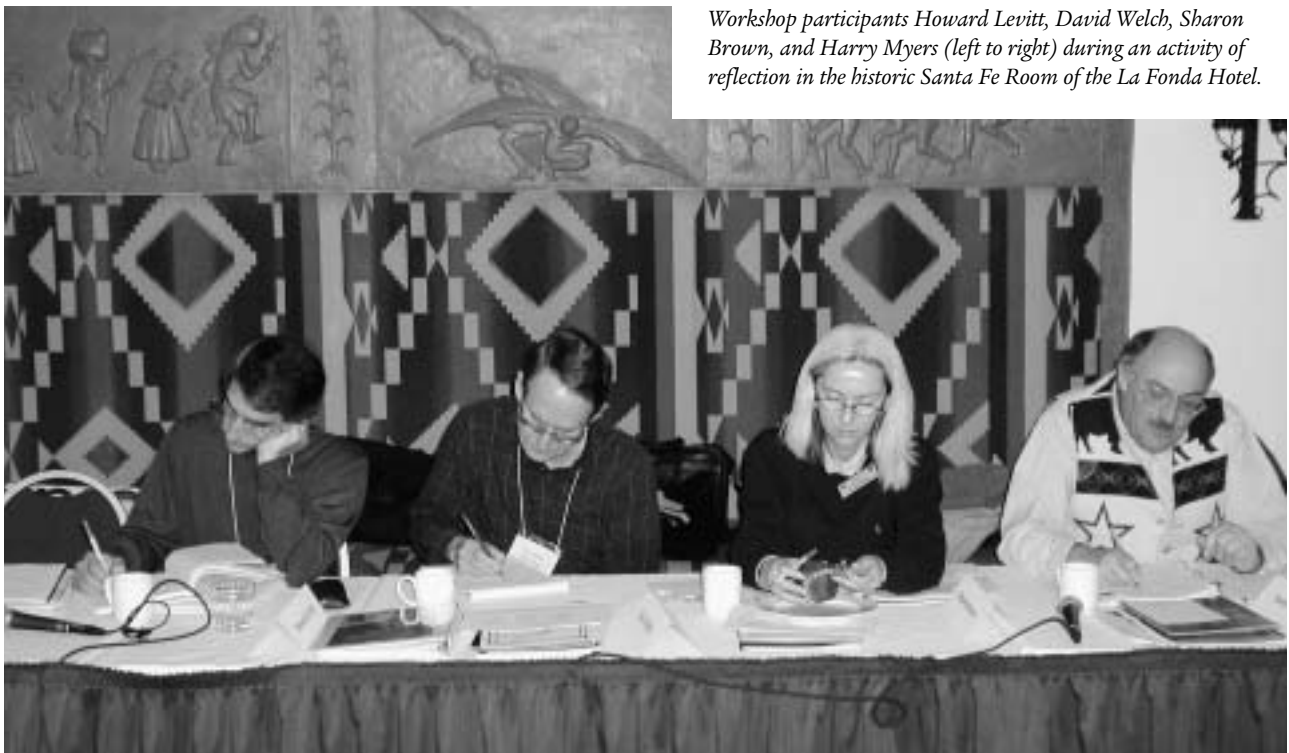
4. Strong interpersonal relationships, trust, and ongoing communications exist among partners.

Participants acknowledged over and over again the central importance of building relationships, citing the ongoing need for communication and education within partner institutions. Harry Myers, NPS lead for El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, said that the mindset must be, first and foremost, to “work with partners to maintain an excellent working relationship.” Wade suggested that in successful partnerships “partners have solid, multiple communication mechanisms in place that foster strong ongoing dialogue among the parties.” The steps to building successful partner relationships and trust are openness, a commitment to no surprises, mutual respect, common courtesy, civility, diplomacy, sincerity, honesty, and

integrity. These characteristics are also critical in engaging potential community partners, according to Ernest Ortega, New Mexico state director for the NPS, who stressed the importance of sincerity on the part of “not just individuals within the organization but the organization itself...” Wade went on to highlight the interdependent dynamic of partner relationships in saying, “There is a common understanding that any partner will grow as far in the partnership as the other partner is willing to help or allow.”

5. Partners appreciate and rely on each other’s strengths.

Successful partners realize that they can accomplish more working together than each can alone. Each partner brings different skills, attributes, experience, contacts, and resources. A successful partnership capitalizes on these, using strengths and resources in complementary fashion. The resulting partnership is more than just additive, since synergy arises from the creativity and diversity that characterize successful partnerships. Nancy Morgan, executive director for the Cane River National Heritage Area, described the impact of partnering with the Cane River National Historical Park as “helping to extend the reach of the park’s resources and expertise into the community and helping to increase community interest and involvement in the park.”



Workshop participants Howard Levitt, David Welch, Sharon Brown, and Harry Myers (left to right) during an activity of reflection in the historic Santa Fe Room of the La Fonda Hotel.

6. The administrative environment for the partnership is flexible, and encourages and rewards creativity, risk-taking, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

A successful partnership is characterized by openness to experimentation, new ideas, and change from the outside. Since the path to achieving goals may not be clear at the beginning, partners need the freedom and the time to explore new avenues for meeting goals, building relationships with potential new constituencies, and reaching agreement among stakeholders. Wade talked of the value of “going slow to go fast” (i.e., taking the time to build a firm foundation for the partnership), and of providing an environment that includes a “willingness to risk failure in order to succeed.”

Many people mentioned the importance of formal and flexible agreements that define responsibilities, expectations, and accountability between partners. “The administrative framework upon which the partnership is built must provide sufficient flexibility and discretion for staff to be able to explore and pursue a wide variety of options to achieve ‘success,’” said Ringgold. “Rigid guidelines and sideboards...constrain creativity, experimentation, and adaptive management.” Providing such flexibility can be a challenge for agencies accustomed to consistency and top-down management. Administering a partnership area successfully means “meeting the needs of local, national, and international interests,” as noted by Sarah Schlanger, BLM lead for El Camino Real National Historic Trail. Flexibility, therefore, is essential.

Recognizing and rewarding partnership success helps to sustain the commitment of all partners as it validates the collaboration and hard work. “Partners need to be recognized at all levels of the NPS for their contributions,” according to Jere Krakow, superintendent of the National Trails System, NPS Intermountain Region. “Start simple (not necessarily small) and celebrate the little successes,” advised Mabery. “Showcase unexpected partnerships,” suggested Bality. “Reward those who ‘get it,’” said Sermon.

7. Sustained leadership is present at various levels in both agency and non-agency partners.

Leadership is necessary not only on the ground where the day-to-day work of partnerships takes place, but also at the management levels that create a supportive partnership environment. Welch expressed the belief that “the partnership must be...promoted at the working level, not just with the leadership.” Murray observed that personal commitment at the top manager level, however, is critical to success. “The manager sets the pace and attitude for the behaviors of the rest of the organization,” he said, “...and predisposes the staff to how they will function toward the partner.” Dealing with the policies and or bureaucracies of partner organizations and agencies, and getting “higher-ups” to agree to a strategy or action—identified as challenges by Sharon Brown—are leadership tasks critical to partnership success. Having the right people involved is important, and accounts for 75 percent of the success of

partnerships, according to Murray. John Shepard, associate director of the Sonoran Institute, identified as a key factor having “leaders who have credibility among potential partners.” At the same time partnerships can’t be dependent upon the individuals involved. “There [must be] sustained leadership even if the leaders change,” said Wade.



Nora Mitchell, Jere Krakow, and Sarah Schlanger (left to right) brainstorming strategy in a workshop breakout session.

8. A strong local “taproot” grounds the partnership in place and traditions.

The local connection to place and heritage can be a powerful force for conservation, representing a significant doorway to partnership area success. Local partners are key in helping tap into the “passionate commitment” of local people (Shepard’s term) and the resources that are available locally. According to Charles Flynn, executive director of Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Corporation, the “combination of strong grassroots support and a local government entity that committed resources and credibility to the project” led to success for Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area. Moreover, these local connections have broader conservation benefit. Successful partnerships “build additional constituencies for parks and other public lands through the partners,” suggested Ringgold. Partnership areas provide the means for diverse local interests “to become involved in conserving and sharing significant aspects of their history and environment,” observed Nancy Morgan, which adds authenticity to the stories told. Furthermore, noted Morgan, “[This] personal investment helps ensure long-term commitment to the success of those areas...[and] enhances the community relevance of NPS projects.”

9. Place-based education initiatives provide a catalyst for citizen engagement in partnership areas.

Place-based approaches to education and interpretation have a powerful ability to connect people of all ages with the natural and cultural heritage in their local communities and to instill stewardship values. Place-based “education” can encompass a range of initiatives, involving teachers and students in formal education settings as well as providing informal learning environments for people of all ages. The NPS partnership areas are extremely well-suited for this role because of the community connections and array of local partners.

Workshop participants recognized the human need to relate to physical place, and shared many stories of how they use education to further partnership work. For some it is a way to raise general awareness about a partnership area. Brenda Barrett, national coordinator for heritage areas for the NPS, discovered when visiting many of the 24 national heritage areas that they were doing heritage education. “They were telling me they were doing economic development...or tourism. But when I got there, they were doing...amazing, innovative, regional place-based education....Obviously they knew that was a critical piece that had to be done first. And

they found so much power through intergenerational education.” Educational projects can build bridges to local communities and keep them engaged. Rob Harbour, reserve manager at Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve, said that if he does a historic resources study, “it doesn’t come out as a historic resources study, it comes out as ‘how Coupeville grew,’ and a copy is sent to every resident in the community.” Harry Myers and Sarah Schlanger used El Camino Real public scoping sessions as opportunities to interpret the trail’s culture and heritage to the public at large and create in the communities along the trail a sense of shared heritage that embraces the diverse cultures present.

The Benefits of Place-Based Education

Place-based education, whether formal or informal, benefits partnership areas by:

- ❶ *Investing communities in stewardship by strengthening local connections to heritage and landscape;*
- ❷ *Bringing local stories to the surface and telling them more authentically;*
- ❸ *Building understanding between different local cultures;*
- ❹ *Encouraging integrative thinking;*
- ❺ *Building local pride and cohesion;*
- ❻ *Engaging younger generations in stewardship;*
- ❼ *Building trust between the local community and federal partners.*





a.

a. Plume Rock in Wyoming, one of many landmarks used by emigrants as they traveled west on the Oregon Trail.

b. Saguaro National Park has a unique partnership with the Rincon Institute, which was formed in 1990 through negotiations that modified a major development adjacent to Saguaro's park district east of Tucson. By agreement, Rincon Institute manages natural areas on the development, conducts long-term ecological research, advises on environmentally sensitive development strategies, and conducts environmental education in partnership with the NPS. As part of the agreement, the park acquired additional wildlife habitat on adjacent ranch lands.

b.



c. Redwood National and State Parks visitor center co-staffed by NPS and California Department of Parks and Recreation rangers.

d. National parks increasingly are building partnerships with communities adjacent to the park to address common concerns and issues related to shared resources and public visitation. Mount Rainier National Park in Washington state has a community planner on staff whose job is to work with adjacent communities on these "gateway" issues.

e. Oakland Plantation, one of two plantations within Cane River Creole National Historical Park in Louisiana. The park and the Cane River National Heritage Area cooperate in telling the stories of plantation owners and workers, both free and enslaved, and the unique multicultural history of the region.

f. NPS partnership areas that involve little public ownership require management flexibility in order to deal with a diverse array of challenges. Farmers living and working within Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve in Washington state—a farming landscape centuries old—are experiencing the same difficulties as small farmers elsewhere in the U.S., adding to the complexity of management at Ebey's Landing.



c.



IV. Envisioning a Sustainable Environment for Partnerships

*A*s a first step toward imagining a sustainable environment for partnerships, workshop participants reflected on the larger picture of how partnerships operate. They then described a conceptual model for sustaining partnerships, including the roles of the NPS and partner organizations within it. Finally, they discussed the institutional elements needed for partnerships to flourish.

A. A Conceptual Model for Partnerships

This model grew out of small- and then large-group discussions at the Santa Fe workshop, and was later presented at the November 2003 conference, “Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship,” during a session on “Building a Strategy for Sustainable Conservation Partnerships” (see www.partnerships2003.org). The session audience, which represented various federal agencies and partner organizations, provided feedback, leading to further refinement of the model.

A sustainable environment for partnerships results from a diverse array of communities, agencies, institutions, and organizations working together, all with a common belief in the benefits of conserving natural and cultural heritage and recreational resources. This model is place-based and community-centered, with federal land part of a larger mosaic of landscape and communities. Its vision for sustaining partnerships is inclusive and welcoming—large enough for everyone who is interested to be involved and encouraging to those who have yet to become engaged.

The model for sustainable partnerships (see Figure 1 on page 27) has four “nested” circles, with action that affects partnerships taking place at all levels. Working outward, the circles represent the following:

- **Community-centered, place-based conservation partnerships** are at the center of the partnership model, which assumes community concern about stewardship of local landscapes and heritage values. Citizen-centered, inclusive, and culturally diverse, the



The Role of the National Park Service: Convener, Catalyst, Enabler of Action

The role of the NPS in this partnership model is to 1) engage people and listen; 2) tap into and enhance the existing stewardship ethic, drawing on indigenous and local knowledge and management approaches; 3) seek to understand different cultures and perspectives; 4) catalyze learning at all levels of the model, linking to local natural and cultural heritage; and 5) create governance structures that are appropriate to the local community and that include communities in meaningful decisionmaking.

The NPS can play a fundamental role in heritage areas, rivers and trails, parks, and partnerships in general by providing information that fosters, both within and outside the agency, a greater understanding of partnerships (including the range of partnership approaches) and of local cultures and communities. The NPS can also facilitate connections globally by helping to share local experience and foster understanding of our common heritage. For the NPS to excel at the critical catalytic role envisioned requires an organization that values, instills, supports, expects, and rewards collaboration at all levels of the agency. Participants offered the following specific thoughts:

- ☉ *I see the NPS as a catalyst for meetings that connect people through dialogue and exchange. We can also use web-based technologies and learning to bring people together.*
- ☉ *Facilitation and support has to do with convening, bringing together existing and potential partners, bringing together resources, building capacity, providing a public education function.*
- ☉ *There is a lot to be said for a decentralized approach, and communicating and sharing best practices and learning opportunities across that very decentralized system.*
- ☉ *We need to encourage and assist people in telling their own stories about a place.*
- ☉ *We can assist in developing a consensus around the values that are reflected in place.*
- ☉ *It is incumbent on us to reach outside our own communities to those who may not totally buy in to partnerships, to educate them on what partnerships are and what they can do.*
- ☉ *We can act as partnership mentors and connectors—"partnership coaches"—to provide guidance on how to create sustainable partnerships.*



The Role of the NGO Partner: A Critical Link to Local Communities and Values, and a Bridge to Federal Agencies

The NGO partner provides an important link to local communities and values and plays a critical role in successfully engaging local communities. Partner organizations can promote the uniqueness of the park or partnership area to local citizens and help generate a local consensus that is powerful. The NGO partners bring important core values to the partnership (e.g., inclusiveness, public-spiritedness, generosity) that are often locally rooted, and a sense of social purpose that both complements the agency's purpose and softens the bureaucratic "edges." Partners help ensure the local relevancy of the park's vision and management plan, and they can be the means by which the "stewardship baton" is extended from the NPS to a much wider array of local groups and volunteers. In these ways partners bring a multiplier effect to the agency's stewardship efforts that is important in helping to ensure a lasting legacy. Some specific thoughts from participants:

- ☉ *We need to stay current on new approaches and develop our staff skills for partnering.*
- ☉ *We need flexibility of financial management so that in our institutions we are looking at partnerships as an array of opportunities, not just as contractual relationships.*
- ☉ *We can celebrate "small victories" every year. This energizes volunteers, brings a little joy, and reminds the community that all this persistence, sweat, and frustration is actually worthwhile.*

partnership model taps into local knowledge, love of place, and stewardship ethic, involving individuals and communities in telling their stories. For governance, communities are at the table, sharing in the decisionmaking and problem-solving. In this model, communities are both custodians and beneficiaries of the stewardship of their heritage and special places.

- Surrounding this local action base is a circle of facilitation and **partnership support**, made up of the NPS and other federal agencies, state agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at all levels (local, regional, and national), who are working in partnership with communities.
- The next level, moving outward, is the **authorizing environment**, which involves the NPS and other land management agencies and their legal authorities, along with funders and the legislative process and players.
- The final circle is actually a process of **learning, feedback, and transformation** that connects with and permeates all the preceding levels. The feedback process operates as an ongoing exchange of ideas and experience among communities and practitioners at all levels, from local to international. This process loop enriches and expands understanding of

governance models and best practices, builds partnership capacity and skills, facilitates an understanding of partnerships at all levels, and fosters an atmosphere that allows new leadership to emerge.

The partnership model as described is dynamic. Figure 1 to a certain extent reflects the current situation, with the authorizing environment presenting barriers (e.g., certain agency procedures, a lack of understanding) and the partnership support function relatively modest. As the process of feedback and transformation grows, the institutional barriers should shrink and facilitation and support for partnerships on the ground should grow (see Figure 2).

In the course of the discussion, Angela West from the National Recreation Group, Bureau of Land Management, offered some assumptions regarding sustainability of the partnership model, including the following:

- The partnership process requires honesty and openness, a commitment to change, and an action mindset;
- Human beings must be a part of the ecological context;
- A commitment to risk is necessary to build trust; and
- Partnership requires significant organizational maturity.

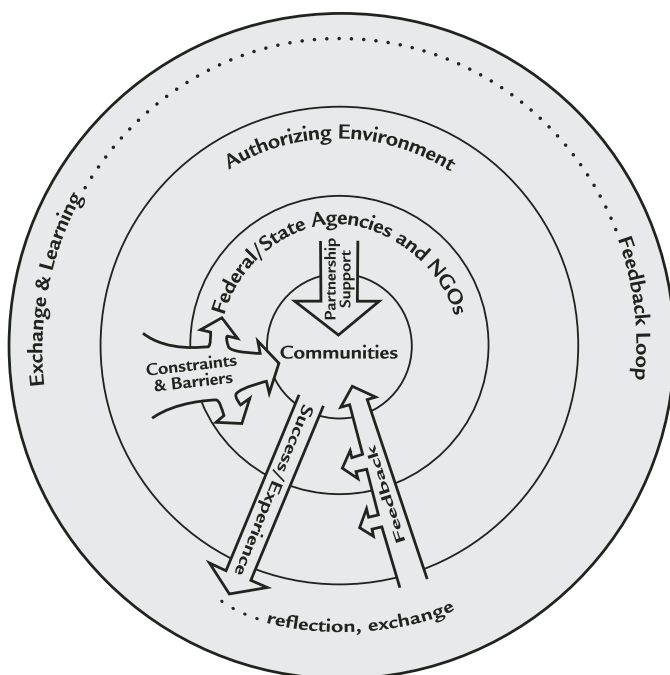


Figure 1

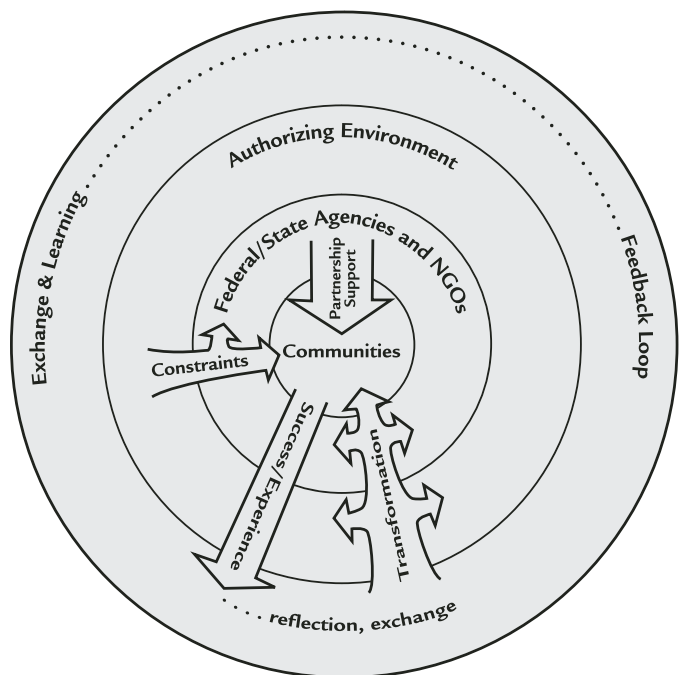


Figure 2

B. An Institutional Framework for Sustainable Partnerships

The institutional framework and policies that are in place are critical to partnership work. A lot of people play a role in partnership success, and the administrative environment can either encourage and support partnership work or hinder and undercut good work on the ground. The discussion that follows, which applies to federal agencies as well as partner organizations, describes a framework and process that can make possible partnership success. This institutional framework does not exist as described. It is a composite of the situation that exists to varying degrees in some areas; participants' understanding of what has nurtured the most successful partnerships; and the institutional support they have found most helpful in their partnership work.

1. Enabling framework: foundational elements

The first elements that contribute to this ideal enabling framework are so central that they are named **foundational elements**. They are a) a guiding vision on partnerships; b) the presence of a strong "partnership culture" within agencies and partner organizations; and c) collaborative leadership skills. With these foundational elements in place, it becomes easier to enable and support certain key partnership processes.

a. An overall guiding vision on partnerships

A guiding vision on partnerships sets forth a "map" of what a partnership world looks like: how partners work together, the roles they play, and how they can be effective collectively in reaching common goals. Such a guiding vision "needs to be compelling and substantive," stated Greg Moore. "It should connect the dots and create a common architecture for people and for community stewardship organizations to all fit into the picture. One of the best roles for leadership is helping people place themselves [within] a bigger picture and feel a connection among colleagues toward a common vision." Reinforcing this thought, Warren Brown, program manager, NPS Park Planning and Special Studies, said that every park, heritage area, trail, or other partnership area needs to have a vision of its role in providing opportunities for visitor and community enjoyment within the broader network of protected places. Jere Krakow suggested that there are many different ways of reaching the broader partnership vision.

b. A strong partnership culture within the federal agencies and partner organizations

Moore remarked that we need to understand more than just how to foster partnerships, we need to better understand the culture of partnerships and to integrate that understanding throughout the NPS and partner institutions. Better integrating partnership culture into the day-to-day functioning would bring broader understanding of partnerships and a greater institutional investment, as well as an openness to new models of governance, all of which would encourage the environments and the leadership that allow partnerships to flourish. People would begin to see partnerships as a way of doing business and, as Andy Ringgold stated, "a means toward jointly accomplishing bigger, longer-range objectives." The NPS must "value and respect partnerships, and understand how critical they are to survival," observed Laura Gates, superintendent of Cane River Creole National Historical Park, "not only survival of the agency and the resources we are protecting, but really a bigger survival issue... Partnering and collaboration [must become] second nature to our thinking."

In addition to understanding the strengths of partnerships, it is also important to understand the vulnerabilities and provide protection from those threats. Commenting on the vulnerability of partnership work, Moore noted that even in an instance of long-established trust and joint accomplishment, the wrong person in a leadership position of either partner institution can jeopardize years of hard work.

Part of understanding partnership culture is to appreciate the range of challenges encountered by those who administer partnership areas. These challenges, in fact, reflect the complexity of society today—understandably so, as partnership areas are connected with the local communities in and around them. An example of this is Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, a centuries-old farming landscape located in Washington state. The difficulties encountered today by small farmers across the country exist within Ebey's Landing as well. Rob Harbour, reserve manager, is dealing with a set of challenges that does not fit within the traditional park management model.

What Is a Partnership Culture?

As interest in conservation partnerships grows, the question arises of what constitutes a partnership culture. Some thoughts from workshop participants include:

- ☉ *The value of partnerships is understood and acknowledged through a deeper commitment to them throughout the NPS and its partners, from the ground up.*
- ☉ *A partnership message and mission is incorporated into all aspects of the organization and its development, including attitudes and approaches, and the training of staff both new and existing.*
- ☉ *People throughout agency and partner institutions understand how their jobs contribute to successful partnerships.*
- ☉ *At all organizational levels, collaborative perspectives and skills are instilled, valued, respected, and rewarded, and partnerships are seen as part of everyone's job.*
- ☉ *People are comfortable with sharing control.*
- ☉ *Room is made within budgetary and staffing systems to support sustained interpersonal relationships.*
- ☉ *Success is redefined to include contributing to community stability, understanding local cultures, and building long-term partner relationships that may not come to fruition for quite some time.*
- ☉ *Partnership areas are viewed not as unique situations but rather as situations where collaboration at all organizational levels has achieved certain successes, and the successes are not the partnerships but the outcomes of those partnerships.*
- ☉ *The agency displays cultural sensitivity and awareness, and engages partners with a true sense of commonality of interests and concerns and a shared purpose.*
- ☉ *The agency is continually mentoring and bringing new people into partnerships in order to transfer a partnership perspective to the next generation.*

Ideas for Encouraging a Partnership Culture within the NPS and its Partner Institutions

- ☉ *Develop a compelling, substantive vision of partnership that can be communicated with all federal agencies and their partners.*
- ☉ *Provide the freedom and ability to make mistakes and learn from them. Partners need to have the ability to build on their own, to work, to form that partnership as something different, to be free to innovate.*
- ☉ *Honor the leaders and the partners who are modeling a partnership culture.*
- ☉ *Look at how we can become more diverse in our thinking and more inclusive.*
- ☉ *Provide context, capacity, and the connections to establish partnerships.*
- ☉ *Work for demonstrated leadership commitment to partnerships at all organizational levels in the NPS and its partners.*
- ☉ *Utilize an evaluation and promotion system that values partner skills.*



National and state park maintenance staff work together on an historic structure at Redwood National and State Parks.

c. Collaborative leadership skills, understood and encouraged throughout agency and partner organizations

Collaborative leadership involves a mindset and a set of skills and guiding values that can differ from the leadership employed with more unilateral land management. Collaborative leadership relies on building and maintaining interpersonal relationships over the long term. In the experience of those at the workshop, the successful collaborative leader:

- Operates from an integrative mindset that sees the interconnections and interdependencies
- Thinks in terms of “we” instead of “I”
- Is visionary and able to articulate that vision with different audiences
- Thinks strategically and long term, putting short-term actions within that context
- Displays a mindset that is expansive rather than limiting
- Speaks from both the mind and the heart
- Is sincere and genuine in working with others
- Is entrepreneurial and willing to take risks
- Understands that creativity needs space and flexibility to flourish
- Provides a buffer from bureaucracy to allow for experimentation
- Does not seek control, but enables and inspires others to act
- Creates a learning environment
- Works inclusively and celebrates diversity
- Values collaboration and shared effort
- Seeks a shared vision and a big “umbrella”
- Works across disciplinary and jurisdictional boundaries

Although these characteristics are to some extent personal traits that may be present to varying degrees in everyone, they can be encouraged or discouraged by different work environments. For partnerships to flourish, it is important to first recognize these special skills, and then to seek people who display promise in this regard, provide training, and create work environments that enhance, support, and reward these skills.

2. Enabling framework: partnership processes

With the above-mentioned foundational elements in place, process is important to facilitating partnership success on the ground. Key process elements include a) exploring new models of governance, b) sharing responsibilities, c) providing a flexible environment, d) learning from experience, e) integrating this knowledge and practice both vertically and horizontally throughout the organization, and f) communicating effectively about partnerships.

a. Exploring new models of governance

The complex challenges of managing protected areas through partnerships require new ways of working together and new models of governance. Jessica Brown observed that as management of protected areas moves toward more inclusive approaches, new governance models are emerging all over the world, and we can learn from this experience.

Governance of protected areas is currently the focus of much discussion and debate. According to one typology presented at the 2003 World Parks Congress, there are four main types of governance involving protected areas. These are community management, in which the actors include indigenous peoples and local communities; government management, in which management is by central, state/provincial, and/or municipal agencies; private or delegated management, involving management by NGOs, businesses, private landowners, and others; and multistakeholder management, involving joint management and collaborative management (see Borrini-Feyerabend 2003 in Further Reading). Stakeholder participation in collaborative management models can be viewed along a continuum according to the extent to which authority and management responsibility are shared.

Exploring new models of governance raises questions that may challenge our conventional notions of parks and protected areas. These include: Whose protected area is it? Who is making the management decisions? Who is bearing the consequences of these decisions? Who are the managers? As governance moves beyond the model of one central management authority, the definition of “protected area manager” moves beyond that of professional parks staff to include local people and an array of other partners.

b. Sharing responsibilities

Successful partnership areas rely on a paradigm of shared control and local engagement. Local support is essential to making partnership areas work, and sharing control is key to effectively engaging the local public. Sharing control works best when there are good working relationships. In some partnership areas, such as Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area and Ebey's Landing, an engaged local community existed prior to designation, but this is not always the case. With El Camino Real National Historical Trail, a good portion of the early work following its designation involved building that local support.

Many NPS partnership areas are designed to engage and work with local communities and partners from the outset, and there is now considerable understanding about what works and what doesn't. Andy Ringgold believes a partnership area model enhances the ability to achieve symbiosis on a local level. "Redwood National Park was established to protect values and provide opportunities that were inconsistent with [how] the local communities were using those lands prior to establishment," he said. "So the ability through time to develop meaningful and mutually supportive relationships with individuals, local organizations, and the communities themselves was much more difficult than if the initial framework had been set up to [encourage] identifying values of mutual interest and community interests and promoting those."

The most important element of a partnership is sharing control, according to Cassie Thomas, outdoor recreation planner for the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program in the Anchorage office of the NPS. "You cannot 'do' a partnership if you don't have the fundamental philosophy that you are...facilitating, not directing" the joint effort. "We need to find people who are very comfortable with sharing control," Thomas said. Howard Levitt, chief of interpretation and education at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, reinforced this point, saying, "If you imagine your point of view is the one that needs to predominate, the partnership is sunk."

Even in places where the NPS has traditionally exercised a top-down approach to management, however, issues of control are pertinent. Karen Wade believes that sharing control is central to all national parks, traditional and partnership models alike. Drawing from her previous experience as superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, she stated, "We have problems where our employees

Ideas for Expanding the Understanding of Successful Partnerships

- ☉ *Bring park staff into Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance projects on details for a year or two before they undertake a general management plan so they can better understand and build community relationships.*
- ☉ *Provide "thinking partners" who can talk periodically by phone or email to share thoughts and advice on projects.*
- ☉ *Provide for cross-training, e.g., detail people from within a park administration to work on a partnership project from start or finish (could be on an intermittent basis).*
- ☉ *Instead of annual superintendents' conferences that only include superintendents in the region, hold conferences that include all park partners.*
- ☉ *In addition to financial support for heritage areas and other partners, have deputy directors and regional directors hold partnership meetings and attend heritage area commission meetings every one or two years.*
- ☉ *Make use of case studies to communicate lessons learned and provide guidance as to how we practice sustainability.*
- ☉ *Hold international exchanges with others doing this work to learn from experience from other countries.*

Golden Gate bridge, a landmark of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (foreground).



believe that it's their responsibility to control everything and that they can actually fix everything....You learn that you really can't control much of anything [but] that in concert with others, you can make meaning together and create an environment that allows you to work with others to solve problems."

c. Providing a flexible administrative environment

If close attention to partner relationships is the key to sustaining a partnership over the long haul, a flexible administrative environment is key to creating a successful partnership in the first place. The presence of greater administrative flexibility, like sharing control, is directly related to a broader understanding of partnerships, and is part of a strong partnership culture. Success in creating and sustaining partnerships requires creativity, time, and "maneuvering" room—all of which can run counter to agency bureaucracy and timelines. With Congress designating more and more areas to be managed through partnerships, there is a critical need for agencies to better understand how partnerships operate and provide greater flexibility in administrative procedures. "There needs to be the freedom and ability to make mistakes and learn from them," stated Harry Myers. He said a partnership approach should not be institutionalized in a hard and fast manner, because practitioners need to be able to "build on their own, work to form the partnership as something different, and be free to innovate and [craft] something that is perhaps unique."

d. Learning from experience

A considerable body of knowledge exists among the many partnership areas that have been established in the past several decades and the practitioners who have been involved in creating successful partnerships. A learning organization gleans insights and techniques from successful projects and applies this knowledge in other places and situations. Opportunities for dialogue around partnership areas and partnership needs can expand the scope of ideas and enhance understanding of various governance models and partnership tools. Moreover, practitioners need opportunities to interact with their peers to obtain reinforcement and support, counter the uncertainty and loneliness of working in an evolving field, and learn from others doing similar work. Exchange and networking opportunities can enrich the strategic thinking and future direction of partner agencies and institutions, and expand the under-

standing of and support for partnership work throughout the federal agencies and their partners.

e. Integrating partnerships, horizontally and vertically

As diverse models for governance of partnerships evolve, better integration of partnership information and process among all players (existing partners and potential partners, federal agencies and state and local governments, tribal governments, and private sector players) and at all levels of the model can enhance understanding and local engagement and build more effective partnership relationships. This need for more integration was cited by several workshop participants. Ernest Ortega told of working to build a broad base of support for the proposed Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area in northeastern New Mexico. National heritage areas are relatively new to the western U.S., and in early conversations with diverse cultures and communities and other federal agencies about the proposed heritage area, he encountered some initial resistance. Ortega has been able to work through these concerns by bringing local expertise into the collaboration and working with individual managers or individuals in communities, while also creating opportunities for those people to interact with regional NPS leaders. The Intermountain Region's state offices have played an important integrative function among partners and constituent groups and also within the regional structure.

Similarly, Myers and Schlanger have had to pay attention to information flow within their agencies about their unique El Camino Real partnership while concurrently holding public and community needs meetings and talking with agencies and populations that had concerns. Myers said that the public meeting approach has helped a lot in "involving communities, individuals, interest groups, non-interest groups, and pretty much the whole community up and down that corridor." Greg Moore described San Francisco's Golden Gate region as an example of successful horizontal and vertical integration. "The region today is collectively managed by NGOs, local governments, the state, and federal agencies," he said. A full-fledged alliance deals with common issues and future visions for protected lands in the Bay Area, advocates when necessary, and creates joint strategies. He describes the alliance as an "effective tool in bringing a community base" to the collaboration.

f. Communicating effectively

Effective communication is critical to facilitating the flow of information throughout the model, to the functioning of the learning and feedback loop, to reaching new audiences and potential partners, and to telling the stories of successful partnerships. Communicating effectively with communities involves having a basic message that is meaningful at the local level so people can relate to it. Warren Brown noted these points in expressing the importance of reaching out beyond just the true believers of partnerships. “We very often communicate in ways that celebrate what we consider successes but what other people consider to be failures,” he said. Brown suggested that success in effectively conveying information about partnerships to new audiences is linked to inclusive visioning at the park or heritage area level that considers the community role. As a result, local people relate to and better understand the vision.

Important to effective communication is using terminology that is meaningful and accessible to non-agency partners. Harbour mentioned the need for a common language on partnerships that facilitates collaborations with communities, nonprofit groups, and other constituencies and cultures. Workshop participants noted that agency terminology rooted in traditional management can sometimes cause difficulties in partnership areas. “Manage” is one such

term, which can be problematic in a partnership area that contains a lot of privately owned land. Harry Myers said, “National historic trails don’t really manage anything. Sarah and I aren’t going to manage; we’re going to administer.” Schlanger talked of trying to communicate the vision of a national historic trail to communities, and then realizing that they were presenting El Camino Real as a “visitor experience” to communities, rather than talking about the community experience along the trail. “We’re creating a boundary,” she said. Nora Mitchell, director of the NPS Conservation Study Institute, added to this observation. “Our parks are really set up to welcome people from afar. In a partnership area setting, it’s not only the park that’s inviting the visitors, it’s the whole landscape, and the community and families become part of that process.”

Participants also noted the importance of articulating the benefits of partnerships, both generally and for specific constituencies (see box on benefits). They recognized the importance of telling the stories of partnerships—both the successes and the failures—and the lessons learned. They also stressed the importance of developing an inspiring message for marketing purposes, and offered one sample:

Partnerships are a means of helping the American people protect parks and other special places.



The Benefits of Partnerships

Partnerships:

- ④ Foster a stewardship effort among the general public;
- ④ Provide opportunities for civic engagement;
- ④ Enhance public support for conservation;
- ④ Contribute to the development of civil society;
- ④ Leverage additional financial and technical resources;
- ④ Increase volunteerism;
- ④ Promote intergenerational equity;
- ④ Create opportunities for greater inclusiveness;
- ④ Encourage greater diversity in conservation and heritage preservation;
- ④ Share valuable lessons that can be applied in other settings;
- ④ Expand the range of strategies for conserving natural and cultural heritage.

a. Donner Lake in California, just below the summit of Donner Pass on the east side of the Sierra Mountains. More than 200,000 gold-seekers and farmers followed the California Trail to the gold fields and rich farmlands of California during the 1840s and 1850s. The ill-fated Donner-Reed party, in trying to cross the Sierras, was stopped by an unusually heavy, early snowfall and spent the winter in hastily-built shelters near the lake. Nearly half the party of 87 perished over the winter.



b. The proposed Northern Rio Grande National Heritage area encompasses many historical structures and long-standing traditions. The Abiquiú Morada, the adobe structure shown here, is a “chapter house” of the lay Hermanos Penitentes in Abiquiú, New Mexico.



c. One of several crossing sites on the Blue River in northeastern Kansas used by emigrants heading west to Oregon and California. In the early spring, emigrants often had to wait for days for the Blue River to recede so they could ford their wagons. Their travel route took them into Nebraska territory, where they followed the Great Platte River route into Wyoming.

d. Restoring wetlands on the Lower Colorado River is a challenge. An early success for Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area in Arizona was the East Wetlands Restoration Plan. The Heritage Area served as a neutral, trusted body in building consensus among the 28 stakeholders (including the major landowner, the Quechan Indian Nation) who agreed to the 1,400-acre plan along five miles of the Colorado River.



e. A historic “candellia camp” (ca. 1918) on the Seminole Trail, within the boundary of the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River in Texas. At one time part of a major industry, candellia camps that processed the ubiquitous wax-covered candellia plant were once common along the Texas and Mexico sides of the Rio Grande. Many such historical features within the wild and scenic river boundary will be cooperatively protected through landowner agreements.



V. Creating a Sustainable Environment for Partnerships

This chapter opens with a section on creating change, looking first at some strategic considerations and then discussing the process of change. This is followed by a presentation of the strategy put together by workshop participants for creating a sustainable environment for partnerships. The final section presents concluding thoughts.

A. Creating Change

1. Approaching change strategically

Before participants began brainstorming a strategy for achieving sustainable partnerships, they considered the elements of a strategic approach, as presented by Karen Wade. The first step in approaching change strategically is to create a **vision** (usually arising out of a perceived need for action) for what you want to achieve. The next step involves developing an assessment of the **need**, which drives the **research** phase that follows. Research is necessary in order to focus your actions—to ensure that you are on the right path and using resources wisely—and, in this case, sustainable conservation has to be an important part of that process. After the research phase comes **integration**, in which the action steps you will be taking are integrated into existing programs. This phase includes developing the scope and dimension of what you want to do. In the case of sustainable conservation partnerships, Wade suggested a broad-scale, “big tent” vision with plenty of opportunities for interested citizens and organizations to be involved. She recommended bringing in others as early as possible “because you want the partners to have heart and soul in it.” Next comes developing a foundation for **joint decisionmaking**, which requires clarifying roles and responsibilities. The last step is **action**. In many cases we spend all our time on actions, according to Wade, without gaining the needed context that comes from the preceding steps. “Our thinking [today] should be on the front end of this process,” she said, “...and maybe we can provide some sharper focus on two or three strategies that could push us into a new dimension in terms of leadership for partnership areas.”

2. A theory of change

One model of a change process is presented here to provoke thinking and dialogue (see Table 2). This particular model (there are others in the literature) has emerged from studies of health-related change, which found a continuum of behavioral modification leading to change in individuals. Accompanying each level of change are possible strategic actions that can be taken to move people to the next level of behavior. Choosing actions appropriate to the existing level of change maximizes the effectiveness of the action. Change within an organization will be more complex than the model presented here, and may well have additional steps within each level.

Movement can take place in both directions between levels two and four, so it is important to reinforce the desired behavior. Some of the causes of backward movement can include crisis, fear, or new players affecting the process. Training, experience, and the presence of a strong vision can moderate the backward movement.





B. Developing a Strategic Approach to Sustaining Partnerships

The recommendations that follow are offered as a pathway toward the vision of sustainable partnerships presented in Chapter IV. They address the following objectives that participants believe essential in attaining the vision:

- Encourage and instill a partnership culture within federal agencies and partner organizations;
- Encourage, instill, and reward collaborative leadership; and
- Continue to develop the understanding of partnership success and the tools and techniques for achieving and sustaining success.

Workshop participants recognized that developing and implementing a strategy for sustaining partnerships would by necessity involve more time and many more people, and that what emerged from this workshop was the beginning of a longer process. Although the workshop focus was on NPS partnerships, participants acknowledged that the recommendations can also apply

Table 2. A Model for Change

<i>Levels of Change</i>	<i>Possible Actions</i>
1 — Unaware 	Raise awareness of the need for change. Recommend change.
2 — Aware, concerned, considering 	Identify perceived barriers and benefits to change.
3 — Planning for change 	Provide logistical information and encouragement by emphasizing benefits. Use peer groups to motivate.
4 — Implementing change 	Provide information and encouragement by emphasizing benefits. Reduce barriers through problem-solving. Build skills; provide social support.
5 — Sustaining change	Provide information on benefits of changed situation. Assure of ability to sustain change. Provide social support.

— Adapted from Cabanero-Verzosa, Cecilia. 1996. *Communication for Behavior Change*. P. 4, Fig. 2. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.

to other federal agencies working in a community–public land setting. With this in mind, they offer the following recommendations to the NPS and other federal agencies in order to create a sustainable environment for conservation partnerships.

1. Develop a compelling, inspirational statement conveying the vision and message that partnerships are integral to carrying out the mission of the National Park Service, and disseminate the message throughout the agency. The message can demonstrate the relationship between partnership work and current national priorities within the agency (e.g., the NPS seamless network of parks and protected places).

- Engage people at all levels in the agency so that they realize their role in and feel ownership of the partnership successes.
- Identify and cultivate champions for this message both within the agency and among partners.
- Develop a marketing strategy for promoting the message widely within and outside the agency.

2. Identify the assets and resources that exist within the NPS and other federal agencies to build on current strengths.

- Identify the 10 most exciting partnership stories throughout the agency that demonstrate best practices.
- Compile lessons learned; assess benefits and beneficiaries.
- Assess current tools in the partnership toolbox; identify gaps and develop strategies for filling the gaps.
- Identify connections to place-based education.
- Identify organizations and programs that support capacity-building and assess current programs and gaps.

3. Undertake research and analysis to support partnership development and, based on the research results, recommend actions to enhance the sustainability of partnership work.

- Assess needs at the ground level for partnership work (e.g., need for greater sustainability, growth capacity, connectivity, resources, new leadership skills) and identify which ones are most critical.
- Assess the barriers to partnerships (e.g., lack of rewards to people who take risks, staff continuity, sense of isolation, certain agency planning and administrative processes) and recommend actions for addressing the barriers.

- Assess the benefits of partnerships, both tangible and intangible.
- Define the various models of governance and what works in the way of partnership infrastructure.
- Define the characteristics of successful leadership in working with partners.
- Examine issues of economic sustainability in the “living landscapes” of partnership areas, especially the role of innovation and entrepreneurial activity.
- Identify incentives for community-based partnerships.
- Identify “growth enhancers” and ways to create an environment where partnerships can grow.

4. Build capacity within the NPS, other federal agencies, and partner organizations. Potential “capacity” topics that can improve skills and understanding include organizational development, board development, communication, volunteer development, fundraising, strategic planning, and cultural awareness and sensitivity.

- Identify key audiences.
- Identify methods to build capacity (e.g., cross-training, short-term job exchange, “thinking partners,” long-term details, national and international exchange programs).
- Share widely the successes and lessons learned, through websites and other electronic means and through publications, workshops, mentoring, coaching, networking, etc.
- Include partners in the annual NPS superintendents’ conferences.
- Undertake networking to create an ongoing exchange of experience and lessons learned, share best practices, and reduce the isolation of this work.
- Convene a meeting of agencies and partner organizations whose mission is to support on-the-ground partnership work as a first step toward building a comprehensive interagency partnership strategy and network.

5. Share success stories and celebrate successes in order to increase understanding of partnership work among a broader array of people.

- Meet with and brief key leaders.
- Create a comprehensive, interactive, interagency website that is available to agency staff and partners and that enhances partnership networking through such means as success stories, skills training opportunities, and links to other websites and sources of information (e.g., the NPS Intermountain Region’s document, *The Power of Partnerships*; see Further Reading).

C. Looking Ahead

A wealth of partnership wisdom resides with people who have put many hours into making conservation partnerships successful on the ground. The practitioners who participated in the Santa Fe workshop understand that success happens—whether in a national park or partnership area or on other public lands—because of the hard work of many people at all levels within the federal agency and partner organizations. Together they create a supportive environment for building relationships at the community level.

At this workshop, participants identified components of successful conservation partnerships, which can guide others doing similar work. They also described an inclusive model for sustaining these partnerships over time, and the institutional framework and policies that would lead to a sustainable environment for partnerships. Finally, participants developed recommendations that would put this model and framework in place, engaging all levels of the National Park Service, sister agencies, and a wide range of partners. This report places these findings and recommendations before a larger audience, including the NPS and others, who can act on these recommendations.

Within the NPS and sister agencies there is considerable movement today toward embracing partnerships as a means of accomplishing conservation goals. Within the NPS, the Partnership Council is helping to define an agency-wide vision of partnerships and identify strate-

gies for achieving the vision. Similar attention is being paid to partnerships among other federal land managing agencies, as evidenced by “Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship,” the national conference convened in November 2003 by seven federal agencies (National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). Within the Department of the Interior, the “Four Cs Partnership and Collaboration Team” is leading department-wide efforts to put in place a partnership and collaboration culture, applying the “4C principles” of cooperation, communication, and consultation in service to conservation.

As all of these efforts move forward, it is imperative to continually capitalize on the insights gained from experience in order to craft the structure and processes that will sustain partnerships over the long term. It is attention to the sustainability of partnerships that breathes life into the community-centered model presented in this report. Ultimately, creating vibrant, long-standing partnerships at the community level is the most effective way to “pass the conservation baton.” For it is through partner relationships cultivated over time that we can nurture a stewardship ethic, reach new constituencies, commemorate stories hitherto overlooked, and achieve an engaged citizenry in conserving the cherished landscapes and heritage of the American people.

Rio Grande in northeastern New Mexico within the proposed Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

International Landscape Designations

1. IUCN Categories of Protected Areas (from IUCN's *Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories*, 1994)

In 1994, IUCN–The World Conservation Union defined “protected area” as “[a]n area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means.”

The seven categories of protected areas recognized by the IUCN and their management objectives are as follows:

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| Ia | Strict Nature Reserve — A protected area managed mainly for scientific research and monitoring; an area of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features, and/or species. |
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| Ib | Wilderness Area — A protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection; a large area of unmodified or slightly modified land and/or sea retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition. |
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| II | National Park — A protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation; a natural area of land and/or sea designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations; (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area; and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational, and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible. |
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| III | Natural Monument — A protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features; an area containing one or more specific natural or natural/cultural features that is of outstanding or unique value because of its inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities, or cultural significance. |
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| IV | Habitat/Species Management Area — A protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention; an area of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species. |
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| V | Protected Landscape/Seascape — A protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation; an area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological, and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. |
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| VI | Managed Resource Protected Area — A protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems. These areas contain predominantly unmodified natural systems, managed to ensure long-term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while also providing a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs. |
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2. UNESCO Categories of World Heritage Cultural Landscapes (adapted from UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. Paris: UNESCO, 1996)

Cultural landscapes represent the “combined works of nature and of [humans]” described in Article One of the World Heritage Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic, and cultural forces, both external and internal (UNESCO, 1996, section 36).

“The term ‘cultural landscape’ embraces a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment” (section 37).

Cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land use relative to the characteristics and limits of the natural environment in which they are established, as well as a specific spiritual relationship to nature. Protection of cultural landscapes can contribute to modern techniques of sustainable land use and can maintain or enhance natural values in the landscape. The continued existence of traditional forms of land use supports biological diversity in many regions of the world. The protection of traditional cultural landscapes is therefore helpful in maintaining biological diversity (section 38).

Section 39 of UNESCO’s *Operational Guidelines* provides a description of cultural landscape categories:

Cultural Landscape Category Section 39 Descriptions

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- (i) Most easily identifiable, the **clearly defined landscape** is designed and created intentionally by [humans]. This embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons, which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.
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- (ii) The **organically evolved landscape** results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features. They fall into two sub-categories:
- a **relict (or fossil) landscape** in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. Its significant distinguishing features are...still visible in material form.
 - a **continuing landscape** which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time, it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.
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- (iii) The **associative cultural landscape** derives its significance from the powerful religious, artistic, or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent.

— Table from *Cultural Landscapes: The Challenges of Conservation*. World Heritage Papers 7. Paris: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2003; originally adapted from UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines*, 1996.

APPENDIX B

Description of the National Park System and other NPS Designations

The National Parks: Index 2001–2003, the “official index of the National Park Service,” lists the congressionally designated properties for which the NPS has responsibilities. The index contains the following descriptions:

The **national park system** is defined as comprising those 388 areas owned and managed by the NPS. The designations for units include: national parks, national monuments, national lakeshores, national seashores, national rivers and wild and scenic riverways*, national scenic trails*, national historic sites, national historical parks, national recreation areas, national preserves, national reserves, national memorials, national parkways, and four designations for areas associated with U. S. military history.

Besides the national park system, **four other categories** of nationally important areas exist: national heritage areas, wild and scenic rivers, national trails, and affiliated areas. These areas, all congressionally designated, are closely linked in importance and purpose to the national park areas managed by the NPS. Although most are not currently defined as units of the national park system, these related areas conserve important segments of the nation’s heritage. Many are managed through partners working in cooperation with the NPS.

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1. **National heritage areas** include entire communities or regions in which residents, businesses, and local governments have come together to conserve special landscapes and their own heritage. There are 24 congressionally designated areas, and more than a dozen proposed national heritage areas. Conservation, interpretation, and other activities are managed by a designated local management entity through partnerships among federal, state, and local governments and private nonprofit organizations. The NPS does not acquire new land in these areas, but provides technical and financial assistance for a limited period.
 2. Rivers within the **national wild and scenic rivers system** are classified as wild, scenic, or recreational according to the degree of development within the boundary, and may include only a segment of a river. The system includes 163 rivers designated by Congress or by the Secretary of Interior (in this case, they must first have been protected at the state level). While some designated rivers are managed directly by the NPS and thus are units of the national park system, 10 are now administered through partnership arrangements between the NPS and other entities.
 3. The **national trails system** includes national scenic trails, national historic trails, national recreation trails, and side and connecting trails. Since the National Trails System Act of 1968, 23 national scenic trails and national historic trails (collectively referred to as long-distance trails) have been designated. The NPS administers 17 of them, and two more jointly with the Bureau of Land Management. These trails cross or touch 47 of the 50 states. The federal government has also recognized almost 900 national recreation trails totaling 10,000 miles in length; some of these are on federal lands, some are state or local trails, and some are on private lands.
 4. **Affiliated areas** include a variety of significant properties with high historic or scientific value. These areas, congressionally designated, are eligible for NPS technical and financial assistance but are neither federally owned nor administered by the NPS.
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* Note, however, that not all designated rivers or trails are units of the national park system.

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The Conservation Study Institute (CSI) was established by the National Park Service (NPS) to enhance leadership in the field of conservation. In collaboration with the NPS and academic and nonprofit partners, the Institute provides a forum for the conservation community to discuss conservation history, contemporary issues and practice, and future directions for the field. The Institute's vision of conservation is inclusive and interdisciplinary, encompassing natural and cultural heritage in defining sense of place, and emphasizes the role of people in stewardship. Reflecting this vision, the Institute's approach is founded on collaborative leadership and community-based conservation involving cooperation and partnerships. A key role of the Institute is to stay informed of new developments in the field of conservation and promote an active exchange of ideas among the academic community, practitioners, and the general public. Through its programs, the Institute contributes to enhanced understanding, involvement, and commitment from a broad spectrum of people, which is critical to the success of conservation today.

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The Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment (QLF) is a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to support the rural communities and environment of eastern Canada and New England, and to create models for stewardship of natural resources and cultural heritage that can be applied worldwide. Incorporated in the United States and Canada, QLF has more than 35 years of experience working in rural communities of the Atlantic region. Its international programs extend to the countries of Central Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean. QLF has a long history of cooperative work with the National Park Service on stewardship projects, public education, and leadership development training. QLF is a founding partner of the Conservation Study Institute.

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The Park Planning and Special Studies Program in the Washington office coordinates policy, guidelines, and funding for preparation of general management plans for existing NPS units. These plans provide a framework for decisions about resource protection, visitor facilities, carrying capacity, and boundary adjustments. The program also coordinates congressionally authorized studies of potential new parks, wild and scenic rivers, and national trail system units. The program office in Washington accomplishes its mission by providing guidance on individual planning and study projects, developing training programs and materials, and updating guidelines for the work done by planning staff in the Denver Service Center and regional offices.



BACK COVER: The “Golden Gate,” where San Francisco Bay meets the Pacific Ocean, lends its name to both the bridge that spans its strait and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (foreground). With a total park area that exceeds 75,000 acres, this is one of the largest urban national parks in the world. Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the nonprofit Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy have forged a highly successful partnership that works through educational and stewardship programs to strengthen the park’s relevance to a diverse urban community and engage the public in a wide array of conservation initiatives.

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